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TO

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The session of parliament was opened by commission on the 7th of January; and a speech was pronounced, which, as is usual on such occasions, alluded briefly to the state of public affairs, and to the leading features of the policy of administration. His royal highness the Prince Regent lamented the continued indisposition of his majesty; and had ordered copies of the last reports of the queen's council, respecting the king's health, to be laid before parliament. Suitable provisions were recommended for the support of the royal dignity, for the care of the royal person, and for affording all due facility to the resumption of the royal authority, in the event of the king's restoration to health. The successful defence of the kingdom of Portugal— [illegible] ipline of the Bri- [illegible] troops—and the brilliant enterprise of General Hill in Spanish Estremadura, were mentioned with high satisfaction. The consummate talents of Lord Wellington—the persevering bravery of the Spaniards—the extension of the Guerilla system of warfare, and the hopes of ultimate success which so many favourable circumstances inspired, were expatiated upon, as affording strong inducements to continue the aid which Great Britain had hitherto afforded to the brave and oppressed nations of the peninsula. The great abilities of Lord Minto, the governor-general of India, in planning the expeditions against the isles of France and Bourbon—the talents and bravery of Sir Samuel Auchmuty and the officers and troops under his command, by whom the views of the governor-general were so well seconded—and the entire destruction of the ene-

my's colonial power, were next alluded to; and parliament was reminded of the propriety of turning its attention towards the improvement of that mighty empire which Great Britain had established in the East. With reference to the subsisting relations betwixt Great Britain and America, it was stated, that, although the affair of the Chesapeake had been finally adjusted, the other discussions had not yet been brought to a close; but an assurance was given, that no measure of conciliation should be left untried, which might be found consistent with the rights and dignity of the empire. The finances of Ireland were represented as in a flourishing state; and the Prince Regent expressed his confidence, that, when the estimates for the year should be laid before parliament, a liberal disposition would be shewn to sustain the country in the great contest in which it was engaged.

The address was moved in the House of Lords by the Earl of Shaftesbury; the debate which succeeded was by no means interesting, except for the zeal displayed by Lords Grenville and Grey, to have their sweeping condemnation of the measures of government put upon record. These noble lords, although professing a sincere desire for unanimity on this occasion, were anxious to warn the country against reposing any confidence in the administration.

Lord Grenville, "considering the critical circumstances of the times, and the present alarming state of the country, would have been happy if the address proposed to the House had been so worded as to procure unanimity, on the present day, at least; yet, he did not feel surprised that such had not been the case, when he reflected, that the framers of the speech were the very men, who, by their obstinate blindness, had brought the country to the brink of ruin, and who, in the midst of the distresses they themselves had occasioned, still held the same flattering and fallacious language. He would protest against a continuance of those measures which had brought such calamities on the country; calamities so real and so momentous, that they must soon press themselves with irresistible force on their lordships' attention, whether or not they were willing to give them the consideration they deserved. People might choose to close their eyes, but the force of truth must dispel the wilful blindness; they might choose to shut their ears, but the voice of a suffering nation must sooner or later be heard. The noble lord said he still retained his objections to every part of the system he had so often condemned; he still deprecated that wanton waste of money, and of all the public resources, when it was more necessary than ever to husband them with the most provident care. He still objected to those commercial measures, which were pompously announced as the most formidable weapon against the enemy, and which had recoiled on our own commerce and manufactures. He still retained his objections to a system of finance, which had forced a debased coin on the people, and had spread bankruptcy and ruin throughout the land."

Nor was Lord Grey less severe in his reproaches. "He should feel unhappy," he said, "if he departed from that house, without declaring that he retained all the opinions he had before held on subjects of great magnitude; opinions confirmed by experience and the evidence of facts; opinions which he should be ready to maintain and defend on future opportunities of discussing them. Whether the noble Secretary of State (Lord Liverpool) chose to allude to the affairs of America on which he had shewn much caution and silence, and ventured to call our transactions in that quarter a proof of the

assertion, that the system of the government had contributed to the security, prosperity, and honour of the country; or whether he intended to refer to the system of our measures in the peninsula, he pledged himself that he should be ready to meet him, and to contend, that whatever might be said to have been done, had not been done to the promotion of the safety and honour of the country; and that the general system adopted had been, in fact, the source of almost all our present and impending calamities."—Such were the terms in which the whole policy of government was arraigned, not at a season when it was still untried, and might, therefore, with some plausibility, have been represented as matter of uncertain and dangerous experiment, but in the beginning of the year 1812, when the measures of administration had already secured so many practical advantages—when they had saved Portugal—kept alive the flame of patriotism in Spain, and opened up the fairest prospects for Europe. As the censure pronounced by the leaders of opposition had been vague and declamatory, the answer made by the Earl of Liverpool was of a general nature. "The present," his lordship was convinced, "was not a fit day to dwell on any details; but the noble baron (Grenville) had entered a general protest against the whole of the system pursued by the present ministers, and on that ground, he was ready to meet him the more willingly, as that system and those measures so condemned, had stood the test of experience. Many opportunities would undoubtedly occur of canvassing the merits of their different opinions; but, as the noble baron had been heard in support of his, it would not be, perhaps, too much to presume, that the same indulgence might be allowed to him. He was firmly convinced that the system the noble baron had so much condemned, was the only one that had saved, or could have saved, this country: to the continuance of that system only, Europe could look for deliverance, and England for permanent safety; in short, by the merits of that system his lordship and his colleagues were determined to stand or fall." The address was carried without a division.

In the House of Commons the ordinary course of proceeding was deranged by a singular interference on the part of Sir Francis Burdett. It is customary that the Speaker, on his return from the House of Lords, should read to the Commons the speech from the throne: the address is then moved and seconded, when a general debate ensues. Such is the usual course; but Sir Francis Burdett thought proper to anticipate the member who should have moved the customary address, and to make a long speech, and move a long address of his own, which, without touching on any of the topics alluded to in the speech from the throne, exhibited a good summary of his own political eccentricities.—On this remarkable occasion the honourable baronet began, by paying a compliment to his royal highness the Prince Regent, and by assuring the house that the prince was not of a temper to be pleased by flattery; but that he would consider those members as his best friends who pointed out the real grievances under which his people laboured. It was of the utmost importance at so great a crisis, that the prince should be addressed in a spirit of candour and truth; and no member of parliament could do his duty to his constituents, to his country, or to the Prince Regent himself, if he failed to represent to his royal highness the general sentiments of the people. This solemn beginning seemed to promise something

at once novel and important; but the honourable baronet instantly descended to his ordinary strain of reproach and accusation. He admitted, indeed, that the exertions of the Spaniards against the common enemy, had been distinguished by bravery and perseverance; and he confessed also, that the British army had sustained its ancient reputation. "But where is the freedom," said he, "to which the superior prowess of Englishmen has been ascribed in the better days of our history?" He maintained, that for the last eighteen years, the distresses of the country had been increasing; that he might even go farther back, and declare, that, since the commencement of the present reign—since the beginning of the American war, every year had brought an increase of calamity; and he concluded of course, "that there was something in our system radically wrong;" that the effects of the American war were still felt in the war in which Great Britain was engaged; that the present contest was begun on the very principles of that unhappy war; that a detestation of French liberty first produced the rupture, and that, on the same principles, the war was still continued; that no one could say what England was now contending for; that liberty had no share in the contest; since whatever might be done by England for the rights of the sovereign of Spain (who had resigned his whole pretensions into the hands of Buonaparte) nothing had been done for the Spanish people; that even if the cause of Spain had been honourably undertaken by the British government, it had now become perfectly hopeless; that the victories won by our arms were altogether barren; that although there had been many brilliant achievements, such as that under General Hill, by which the French had suffered severely, still the invaders were making regular and rapid strides towards the subjugation of the peninsula; that all these evils originated in the departure of this country from the wiser system of former days; that the policy of England had anciently been directed to the preservation of liberty throughout the world, but had of late been degraded by a feeble and base attempt to support the decrepid tyrannies of the continent; and that the progress of France was upon the whole more favourable to the liberty of nations, than the success of her rival. The honourable baronet proceeded to make an attack upon the House of Commons, which he described as consisting of "the supposed representatives of the people of England;" but the admonition of the Speaker quickly brought him to a recollection of the decency which he had outraged. He complained of the restrictions which had been imposed upon the Prince Regent, by which distrust was indicated of his royal highness, and professed to look forward with triumph to the expiration of these restrictions, as the era when an enlarged and liberal system of policy would restore the ancient glory of the country. Various systems of government, he said, had been approved of at different periods of society; but an oligarchy, and, in particular, "an oligarchy of rotten burgh-mongers," has found no advocates out of England. The consequences of this system, according to his view of matters, was, that abroad we had been uniformly unsuccessful; that the despotisms which we had endeavoured to support had fallen prostrate before our enemy, and that at home the country had been overwhelmed with the most signal calamities; that a system of taxation had been created which ruined many and oppressed all; that the lower orders had been reduced to a state of pauperism;

that fiscal tyranny had now been carried to its height, and that an Empsom and Dudley were to be found in every shire of the kingdom; that the desperate resistance which such tyranny was calculated to create, had been kept down by the terrors of a military force; depots, and barracks, and fortifications, had been established in all quarters; and mercenaries and foreigners, who had been unable to defend their own countries, had been brought over to protect the native land of courage and patriotism.—All these things were uttered with becoming solemnity; but before concluding, the honourable baronet did not scruple to descend to a vein of humour. He became very facetious about the appearance and dress of British soldiers, and followed up such jokes by the usual tirade, about "a flogged nation," as he is pleased to call England. He concluded, by descanting at some length upon the tyranny of the Attorney General, the abuse of *ex officio* informations, the scandalous invasions of the liberty of the press, and the severe punishments with which some libellers had been visited by the courts of justice. He then moved an address, in which the above topics were recapitulated.—This address was seconded by Lord Cochrane, who made some general reflections on the impolicy of the war, the impossibility of defending Portugal so soon as the French should make themselves masters of Spain, the tyranny of the Portuguese and Sicilian governments which the English were abetting with so much zeal, and the improper direction of the naval means of Great Britain, by which, if employed, according to Lord Cochrane's views, in enterprises against the coast of France, the military force of the enemy, stupendous as it had become, might have been wholly occupied in his own defence.

When these gentlemen had finished, Lord Jocelyn rose to move the usual address to the throne, in the shape of an amendment to that which had been proposed by Sir F. Burdett. There was no disposition in the house to support Sir Francis; no member, with the exception of Lord Cochrane, had thought fit to countenance him in his proceedings; and even Messrs Ponsonby and Whitbread, the champions of the opposition, expressed their disapprobation of his conduct. Yet did Sir Francis divide the house upon the question, when there appeared one solitary member to vote for the address proposed by him. The amendment of Lord Jocelyn was then put, and carried without a division.

Although the regular opponents of ministers did not press an amendment in either house of parliament, they spoke in terms which sufficiently proved that their opinions on public affairs had undergone no change in consequence of the events which had lately occurred. They still protested against the whole system of policy, by which the affairs of the country had been conducted; they repeated their declarations about the necessity of husbanding the national resources; and although Portugal had been saved, and Spain supported, they still persevered in their former opinions as to continental affairs. Scarcely one tribute of applause for the exploits which had already so much signalized the British arms, and not one word of hope as to the future, was allowed to escape their lips. They rose at the opening of the session merely to intimate their entire disapprobation of the measures of government, and their firm conviction, that by perseverance in the same system, the ruin of the country would be speedily accomplished. Such were the sentiments which they avowed at a time when England stood in a com-

manding attitude ; when, with one hand, she had destroyed the naval and colonial power of the enemy, and excluded him from three quarters of the globe ; while, with the other, she offered protection to all who claimed it ; when, in fine, she had raised her military reputation to an equality with her naval glory.

An opportunity soon occurred for a more full display of the sentiments of opposition. When Lord Jocelyn brought up the report of the committee on the address, Mr Whitbread rose, and avowed his dissent from the opinions expressed in the speech from the throne. He thought that every thing which this country could do for Spain had already been done ; that although the first general of the age, and the bravest troops in the world, had been sent to her support, nothing had been accomplished ; the French had obtained repeated successes ; Saguntum and Badajos had fallen ; the attempt on Ciudad Rodrigo had proved abortive ; Valentia was not likely to struggle long ; Lord Wellington himself, after pursuing Massena to the frontier, had been obliged to fall back ; and, in short, the enemy was in military possession of Spain. In speaking of the conduct of government towards America, he declared, that " instead of a spirit of conciliation," the measures of our ministers appeared to have been conceived in, what he termed, " the spirit of commercial subjugation." In reference to the subject of peace, Mr Whitbread concluded with the following reflections. " He understood the noble lord (Jocelyn) to have stated, that it was impossible to make peace with France in consequence of the personal character of her emperor. He (Mr Whitbread) did not recollect, in all the details of history, one instance in which the private character of the ruler was advanced as a reason for denying peace to the people of a country ; he saw no reason for not making peace with him, in whose hands the destinies of France were placed at present, any more than with the Bourbons when they presided : and the contrary opinion was always to be discountenanced, as it must lead to eternal war ; or rather to a war which could only end in the extinction of either power. It might, he thought, be foreseen, which must fall, in a contest of that description, when it was considered that the greatness of one nation was artificial, while the greatness of the other, such as it was, was natural ; but things need not come to that pass ; they would not ; and, as the present ruler of the destinies of France was likely to live long upon the earth, we must negociate with him whenever an opportunity presented itself. He should now conclude with saying, in answer to the declaration of the noble lord, that Bonaparte had been baffled in his maritime speculations, would to God that France had ships, and commerce, and colonies, for then we should have peace ; but until then the probabilities were against it."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Perceval) made an excellent reply. " He confessed, that the concluding sentence of the honourable gentleman's speech had furnished him with a clue to his objections against the system pursued by his majesty's government ; for if he was indeed anxious that Bonaparte should have ships ; if he was indeed anxious that he should have colonies and commerce, it could hardly be expected that he should approve of the system upon which his majesty's government had acted, or of those endeavours which were intended and calculated to deprive him of all. But as he (the Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer) would wish to follow the honourable gentleman's speech through the series of topics which it contained with as much regularity as possible, he should leave the conclusion for the present, and begin by noticing the notions of the honourable gentleman with regard to the affairs of Spain and Portugal, and the characters of hopelessness and desperation in which he had described the war. And here he would wish to bring back to the recollection of the house, the state in which the war stood at the beginning of the last session: he would wish to bring back to their recollection the opinions and fears and prophecies of the honourable gentleman, and to entreat them to contrast the prospect he then drew with the reality of the present scene; they would find, on such a comparison, that his fears were unfounded, that his expectations were falsified, that his prophecies were erroneous; and yet the honourable gentleman was prepared, upon the same grounds of apprehension, namely, the boasts of Buonaparte, to repeat his prophecies—

> "Destroy the web of prophecy in vain,
> The creature's at his dirty work again."

After such failures, one would have thought the honourable gentleman would have hesitated in his course, and not have continued to hold, that every thing the enemy vaunted he would do, must be accomplished, or that it was impracticable to put any stop to the career of "this spoilt child of fortune." At the period alluded to, as at the present, the honourable gentleman had only re-echoed the language held by the enemy; but there was no saying that he might not again be disappointed. At the commencement of last session, we were to be driven into the sea, and were not to have a foot of ground in Portugal; but, instead of these boasts being accomplished, or the gloomy apprehensions of the honourable gentleman realized, we had not only rescued Portugal from the enemy, but maintained her in security against his utmost efforts. Since this had been achieved, indeed, a new light had been discovered, and it was found that it would not have been the right course for the French to drive us into the sea, but that they should first conquer Spain, and leave us to be swallowed up at the last after we had been permitted to waste our strength! Would any man believe this? Would any man believe, that if it had been in the power of the enemy, he would not have driven us from Portugal? Those who held the opinion, that Buonaparte was irresistible, and that it was in vain to oppose his designs, wondered that he did not at once crush this army, which not only acted in every point to the frustration of his designs, but remained in opposition to him on the peninsula, to his disappointment, to his vexation, and to his confusion. Would he, if he could have prevented it, even by directing against it solely and entirely the whole of his force, have suffered this? No man could think so. He would have left every thing else to accomplish our expulsion; but his power was not equal to his desire: and the country he ruled could not furnish him with the means necessary to effect his most anxious purpose. But though this was his opinion, he would not, therefore, with that presumption with which he charged the enemy, say, that though heretofore baffled and defeated, he might not at some future period accomplish that object in attempting which he had been so severely foiled; but he thought it might fairly be argued from a retrospective view, that we might con-

tinue to maintain ourselves in the peninsula, not only to defeat his plans of ambition, but as a standing contrast to the basest villainy ever exhibited in the world. Yes, he maintained, that on all of these points there never was a more striking contrast than that which appeared in the conduct of the French and British governments upon the peninsula; and if the man who caused it had any view to character or ambition, it must be his most earnest care and business, by every method and invention, to keep it not only from the eye of the peninsula, but of the world." In alluding to the affairs of this country with America, the sentiments expressed by Mr Perceval were at once dignified and forbearing. He declared, that as discussions were depending with the American government, he would not make disclosures which might have a tendency to irritate, but would rather allow his enemies to triumph for a season in their misconceptions. That a war with America would be a source of great evil to England, he readily admitted; but if it should prove hurtful to England, it would prove ruinous to America. He had no wish to see America impoverished, reduced, or subdued; "but sure he was, that no one could construe those conciliatory dispositions of England into fear; conscious of her own dignity, she could bear more from America, for peace's sake, than from any other power on earth."—After some military criticisms from General Tarleton on the conduct of Lord Wellington, the report was brought up and agreed to.

The state of the king's health was the first object which engaged the attention of parliament. Two declarations, by the queen's council, on this melancholy subject, the first dated 5th October, 1811, and the second 5th January, 1812, were laid before parliament; and both houses appointed committees to examine his majesty's physicians, and to report. The result of these enquiries established the improbability of the king's complete and final restoration to health, although the physicians, with one exception, concurred in declaring that they did not entirely despair. Some slight improvement had taken place since the second week in the preceding December; but it was not of such a kind or degree as to encourage any strong hope of his majesty's ultimate recovery.—The history of this most afflicting case was altogether very singular. During the earlier stages of his majesty's illness, the most sanguine hopes were cherished; the king was visited by his family; he took exercise out of doors; the bulletins were discontinued, and his subjects, with that feeling of loyalty which his numerous virtues inspired, rejoiced in the prospect which these favourable circumstances appeared to present. A marked change, however, took place about the beginning of July 1811, and although, even from that period downwards, his majesty had been able at intervals to converse with his medical attendants, yet the symptoms of his illness gradually became more discouraging, until, in the beginning of the present year, they had assumed such an aspect as to induce his physicians to give the report, of which the substance has already been stated. One of the physicians, however, declared, that he had known instances in which patients of the same age, and similarly afflicted with his majesty, had been restored to health; so that the legislature, although called upon, when the restrictions on the Prince Regent should expire, to make a more permanent provision for the exercise of the royal functions than had been thought expedient last year, when

hopes of recovery were confidently entertained, was still bound to keep in view the chance of, at least, a partial re-establishment of his majesty's health, in the provisions to be made for the care of the royal person, and the dignity of the sovereign.

Mr Perceval came forward at a very early period of the session, with a plan for the arrangement of his majesty's household. He stated, that when this melancholy subject had last engaged the attention of parliament, sanguine expectations were entertained of the king's recovery; that so long as such hopes could be indulged, it was the duty of the legislature to look chiefly to the restoration of his majesty to health and to the exercise of the sovereign authority, guarding at the same time against any inconvenience which might arise from the temporary suspension of the kingly functions: That the legislature was now called upon to act in very different circumstances; that an arrangement, not of a temporary, but of a permanent nature, was demanded,—an arrangement which should neither imply a confident hope nor an absolute despair of the king's restoration to health: That the measures adopted last year had made full provision for supplying the exercise of the royal authority; and as the law now stood, by the 18th of February all the authority, as well as all the duties of the sovereign, would devolve on the Prince Regent; and as the civil list would also of course be transferred to his royal highness, it became necessary to make some provision for the personal comfort and dignity of the king: That his majesty's present civil list was the proper fund for such provision, and his present officers and servants, the proper attendants for him during his illness: That as separate establishments for a regent and a king would now be necessary, some addition must be made to the civil list; and an addition of 70,000l. per annum could not in such circumstances be deemed extravagant. He then proceeded to state, that as the lord steward and lord chamberlain had important duties to perform immediately connected with the royal functions, it would be necessary that these officers should be placed round the person of the regent, who was to be invested with the royal authority. In the room of the first, therefore, it was proposed, that the first gentleman of the bed-chamber should be substituted as the chief officer of the king's household; that the vice-chamberlain should be appointed his deputy; that four lords and as many grooms of the bed-chamber, a master of the robes, and seven or eight equerries, together with his majesty's private secretary, should form the new officers of the proposed establishment, which, of course, must be placed under the controul of the queen, to whom the care of his majesty's person had been entrusted: That the expenses of this establishment, in so far as an estimate could be formed from the expenditure at Windsor during the year ending 5th July, 1811, would not exceed 100,000l. This sum, Mr Perceval proposed to take from the civil list, provision being made at the same time, that a deficit, if such should occur, should be supplied upon an application to the treasury, the propriety of which should be afterwards judged of by parliament, and the sum voted out of the supplies for the year. That in the circumstances in which the queen was placed, discharging, as she had done with exemplary fidelity, the duties which she owed to her royal consort, and thus incurring an extraordinary expenditure, it seemed proper that her majesty should have a small addition made to her income, not exceeding 10,000l., which sum should be paid out of the

civil list. It was further proposed, that the pensions and allowances which the king had been in use to grant to the objects of his bounty, should be paid as formerly out of the privy purse; that the expences incurred for medical assistance should be paid out of the revenue of the duchy of Lancaster, on which an excess had arisen of 30,000l. or 40,000l. annually; and, lastly, that a commission of three persons should be appointed, one of them to be a master in Chancery, and the other two to be named by the queen and the Prince Regent, for the management of the king's private property. The commissioners were to be entrusted also with the power of auditing all accounts of pensions and allowances taken out of the privy purse.

Such were the arrangements proposed with reference to the king's household. To the Prince Regent, however, the civil list would, in this manner, be returned 100,000l a-year less than had been enjoyed by the king; and it might be thought most advisable at once to vote the above sum out of the consolidated fund, and to extinguish the exchequer revenue payable to the prince. But as his royal highness had very naturally believed that the income arising to him out of the exchequer should be continued until he should come into possession of the monarchy itself; and as many persons had claims upon this revenue, which amounted annually to 120,000l., it would not have been equitable, in such circumstances, to disturb the supply. There could be no great inconvenience, however, in transferring 50,000l. out of the exchequer revenue of the prince, to meet in part at least the deficiency of the civil list, leaving the remaining 70,000l. untouched; and although there must still be a deficit of 50,000l. this sum might be dispensed with, as the prince had not so large a family as his royal father, and had no occasion, of course, for so considerable an expenditure. It would have been very unfair, however, to transfer the civil list to his royal highness as if it had been solvent, and quite sufficient to defray the royal expenses, when it was known that from the year 1804 downwards, an annual deficit had occurred of 24,000l. which had hitherto been supplied from the excess of the Scots civil list and the admiralty droits. Mr Perceval, therefore, proposed that this deficiency should still be supplied in the same manner, unless it should increase so far as to exceed its present average by 10,000l. when the subject should be submitted to the consideration of parliament. It was finally proposed, that 100,000l. should be voted to meet the expences which the prince had incurred, or might yet incur, on his assumption of the royal authority; a compensation which he had generously declined to receive, so long as he had reason to flatter himself that the change in his condition might be temporary, but which had now become indispensable by the altered circumstances in which the country was placed.

The minister had no sooner developed his plan, than a desire was manifested to obstruct the progress of the measure, which the immediate expiration of the restrictions on the Prince Regent rendered it necessary to accelerate. Mr Ponsonby demanded an account of the reasons which had occasioned the deficiency in the civil list; he censured the perplexity of the minister's plan; denied the propriety of forming any establishment which should cast a magnificence around the king, which he was no longer capable of enjoying; and insisted, above all, that suitable provision should be made for the prince, in whom the royal authority was now to be vested, leaving it to his royal highness to decide on what

might be proper for the dignity and comfort of his father. Mr Ponsonby perhaps forgot that the deficiency in the civil list, although a very proper subject in other circumstances for the consideration of parliament, had no immediate connection with the measure then proposed to the house. He forgot also, when he objected to the household establishment, that his majesty, although severely afflicted, was still the king of England, and could not, in decency even, be entirely stripped of dignity and splendour; and he must have forgotten also, what was at that moment in evidence before the committee, that, since his lamented indisposition, his majesty had been in the habit of communicating with his family and his ministers; that he had shewn himself competent to all the purposes of ordinary intercourse, and feelingly alive to his unfortunate condition. In circumstances such as these, which might still recur, even if a sense of decorum had not opposed all miserable plans of economy, the feelings of humanity would have exclaimed against them. Had the suggestion of Mr Ponsonby, which was enforced by many of his friends, "that it should be left to the heir-apparent to decide upon what was proper for the dignity and comfort of his majesty," been adopted by parliament, his royal highness must have been placed in a situation very distressing to his delicacy.

Other objections were made to the proposed plan by Mr Tierney. It was a most alarming thing, in his opinion, that two courts should be created; that the Prince Regent, exercising the royal functions, should have a splendid court, while the queen should also have her court, to the support of which the enormous sum of 100,000l. was to be applied! What object could the ministers have in view by a proceeding so extraordinary? they could mean nothing else than to create a secret and a dangerous influence; to oppose the splendour, the influence, and intrigue of her majesty's court to the legitimate authority of the Prince Regent's. The minister, in short, by placing grooms of the bed-chamber, masters of the robes, and equerries, at the disposal of the queen, must certainly have intended to subvert the constitution! Mr Tierney condescended to make some observations, which were not very worthy of the occasion. "His objection," he said, "was, that splendid personages were to be placed round his majesty, at the same time that the queen also had splendid personages attached to her household. Why could not one master of the robes and one treasurer serve for both? It was not well to let it go out to the country, that in his majesty's present state a master of the robes was necessary to take care of his dress."

These objections having been overruled, a bill was brought in to make provision for the better support of his majesty's household, and for the care of his majesty's real and personal property during the continuance of his indisposition. Mr Tierney renewed his attack. He contended, that as the civil list had been maturely arranged in the year 1804, and as there had, from that year downward, been a regular excess in the departments of the lord steward, the lord chamberlain, &c. an account should be laid before parliament, shewing the amount of the charges and the reasons of the excess. This proposal was readily acceded to; but when the accounts were produced, Mr Tierney expressed his dissatisfaction with them; and, in conjunction with other members of the house, renewed his opposition to the bill. He began, by paying some merited compliments to the character

of the Prince Regent. Alluding to the act of the preceding year, by which his royal highness had been called to the regency, Mr Tierney remarked, "that the restrictions contained in that act were such as the Prince of Wales felt were not only painful, but injurious and insulting to the character of his royal highness. Since the passing of that act up to the present moment, his royal highness had conducted himself in such a manner, as not only to call forth the admiration of the country, but also to remove any suspicion, (if any man had suspicion lurking in his mind at the time the act passed), that his future conduct would not be regulated in the same manner. The whole of his royal highness's conduct had been directed by attention to the comforts of his royal father, and had on all occasions done credit to himself, and would refute any insinuations to the contrary. There was nothing in his royal highness's past conduct that could lead him to a suspicion, that if he was clothed with full powers he would abuse those powers." Mr Tierney, however, contended, that the measure before the house, was one of great financial but still greater political importance; that, although the Prince Regent was now to be permanently invested with the royal authority, and to enjoy the revenues of the sovereign, he was still left in possession of part of a revenue which belonged to him only as Prince of Wales, and which ought now to fall into the exchequer; that the result of the arrangement would be such as to place at the disposal of his royal highness a civil-list revenue exceeding that which his royal father had enjoyed by 20,000l. a-year; that a part of this large fund was to be placed beyond the controul of parliament; that if the prince were to have a privy purse, as to the propriety of which there could be no doubt, his royal father, in the condition to which he was reduced, could certainly have no occasion for such a purse; that the privy purse belonged to the office, not to the person of the king; that, instead of leaving to the uncontrolled disposal of the prince an annual sum of 70,000l., parliament ought at once to interpose and pay the debts which his royal highness had contracted; and that it would be much more creditable to the house to enter on a thorough revisal of the civil list, and establish it upon a footing suitable to the dignity of the crown, and the generosity of the nation, than to add to a revenue, which had been found inadequate to the purposes to which it was destined. The right honourable gentleman then proceeded in a strain of argument, calculated to sow distrust betwixt the prince and the ministers, for whom his royal highness had by this time indicated a predilection. "If they did not enter at present upon a full arrangement," said he, "every year they went on they would be continually exposed to a fresh discussion on the subject of the civil list. It was true, they were told, that the average excess had been hitherto discharged out of the droits of admiralty and the excess of the Scotch revenue, and that if the expenditure of his royal highness should exceed that average excess, it would be necessary to come to parliament. What was this, he would ask, but an indirect statement, that an addition was to be made to the civil list to the amount of this average excedent, while in the outset he was to be curtailed of 50,000l. enjoyed by his father? The fact was, that this was a plan to keep the Prince Regent always in restraint, always under the necessity of applying for something from ministers, for which, no doubt, he was to give something to ministers

in return. Their conduct appeared here in the most artful light He wanted, therefore, to see the prince entirely free from ministers. During the whole of the last reign, animosities had taken place respecting the paying off the debts contracted by the civil list. Why, then, would not the minister at once come down, and ask from the house, he would not say a lavish grant, but such a sum as they ought to grant? Was it the way that the civil list ought to be provided for at the commencement of a reign, to tell the house that the excedent of 124,000l. was to be paid out of the droits of admiralty and Scotch revenue? Every thing in this business was left unexplained, and the house was left completely involved in doubts and perplexities. Throughout the whole bill, there was an apparent distrust of his royal highness, while every thing was calculated to appear like very great kindness to him. In place of the 100,000l. taken from the civil list, 70,000l. were to be given him, for which he was to be under no controul. But this was one side of the picture only, and it was proper also to look at the other. Here, then, was a settled distrust manifested respecting the intentions of his royal highness; he was considered by them as incapable and unfit to be trusted with the management of his father's servants; the father was placed under the controul, not of his son, but of others. The distrust entertained of the Prince Regent was the real reason for all this conduct."

Mr Tierney took the lead in these discussions on the part of opposition; but objections of a different kind were started by other members. Complaints were made of the obscurity of that part of the civil-list accounts which was comprehended under the head of diplomacy. The charge in this department had increased, it was said, at a period when the country seemed to have no opportunity of sending out diplomatists; and some minute objections, which it were useless to recapitulate, were made to the various items of charge. If the house should pass the bill, it must, without information, recognise the necessity of an excess in the expenditure above the revenue of the civil list to the amount of 124,000l. annually. The provision for paying the prince's debts was described as highly irregular. No application of this kind ought to have been made to parliament in any other shape than that of a message from the prince.

Mr Whitbread summed up the arguments of opposition, and concluded with the following piece of declamation, which may afford a tolerably fair specimen of his eloquence. "This bill," said he, "teemed with influence: Under it three commissioners were appointed to take care of his majesty's property; these gentlemen were to take an oath of secrecy, so that the parliament could know nothing of their proceedings; to the queen, who was not their mistress, to the prince, who was not their master, they were bound to explain all their acts; but they must conceal every thing from the Commons' House of Parliament, who ought to be acquainted with every farthing expended. He conceived it right, in an argument of this kind, to put extreme cases; and he would ask, as had been done by an honourable baronet (Sir F. Burdett), whom he did not then see in his place, suppose this money was laid out in the purchase of Cornish boroughs, suppose it was expended in procuring seats in that house, for the benefit of the real and personal estate of the king, though, in a narrow view, he might benefit by it, still, being destructive of the constitution, must n

not ultimately be destructive of the monarch? When the two courts were constituted, a factious opposition from the queen's court might be experienced by the ministers of the regent, who were the proper ministers of the crown."

Mr Perceval made a most satisfactory reply, to which it is impossible to do justice, otherwise than by selecting some of the most prominent passages. "The question before the house," he said, "was, Whether or not the objections to the bill were of such a description, that it was their duty not to proceed with it without that detailed enquiry which had been so strongly recommended? The honourable gentlemen had pointed out several items in the papers, into which they wished that some enquiry might be made before they could acknowledge the necessity of agreeing to the grants in the bill. If, on a view of the expences of the household, and of the charges likely to be brought upon it, it should satisfactorily appear that no more was asked for than what was indispensable, no enquiry would then be deemed necessary; but should any jealousy exist in the house, with respect to particular points, it would then become a question, Whether that enquiry ought not rather to take place hereafter, than be allowed to interrupt the important business before the house? Although, on a general view of the civil list, it might appear that no greater sum was required than what was sufficient to defray the expences of the household, there might be some points requiring subsequent detailed information." In reply to an observation which had been made on that branch of the civil list which relates to diplomatic missions, Mr Perceval observed, "much had also been said of the grants to foreign ministers. The right honourable gentleman who opened the debate, had said, generally, that a great number of those sums ought to be explained, but had not stated any particular item. The honourable gentleman, however, who had last spoken, had particularized several sums, which appeared to him objectionable on the face of them, and required explanation. The first thing which seemed to strike the honourable gentleman with surprise on this subject was, that when the number of missions at different courts were lessened, the expences should be increased. The house would observe, however, that there was no increase in the salaries. On the contrary, in the salaries there was a considerable diminution. But the honourable gentleman and the house ought to know, (and in saying this he went a great way towards giving the explanation required), that in the state in which things were on the continent, it would not be wise, in many cases, to send missions on an established salary. The duration of those missions was not likely to be long. In preference, therefore, it was advisable to send special missions; but the expences of these missions were defrayed in a very different manner from the others. The honourable gentleman declared, that an explanation on this subject was due to Marquis Wellesley, who, by a misconception, he stated, had received the expences, described in the papers, over and above his salary. No such thing. The noble marquis had not received a farthing of salary on account of his mission to Cadiz. He had not received a farthing as a remuneration for his services. But the honourable gentleman characterised the expences as large, and seemed to think they were disproportioned to the length of the service by which they had been incurred. Now, it was very evident, that the expences of a person

going to any place in the character of an ambassador for a short time, must be much greater in proportion than the expences of a person going in the character of an ambassador for a long period. The honourable gentleman also declared, that a debt of explanation was due to Sir Sydney Smith. The house had already heard an explanation on that subject, and amply sufficient it was. They had heard that the money which he had received was in return for expences incurred many years ago. 'Oh then,' said the honourable gentleman, 'the country ought sooner to have discharged this obligation.' But let it be recollected at what a distance these services were performed—in Egypt and on the coast of Syria; what a difficulty there existed to procure vouchers of the expences; how frequently Sir Sydney Smith was absent from the country, and consequently interrupted in the arrangement of the accounts; how anxious he naturally was that there should be every possible degree of exactitude on the subject; and it would not appear surprising that some delay had taken place. If, however, more explanation was thought necessary, he had no objection to the production of the details from the different offices; but he was confident it would not be found in these details that any sum had been given to Sir Sidney Smith as a remuneration for his services. All that had been given was merely a remuneration for his expenditure. Let the honourable gentleman consider the nature of Sir Sidney Smith's services; the character of the people with whom he had to deal, and the effectual way in which he discharged the trust reposed in him, and he did not think that he himself would deem the sum stated to be greater than, under all the circumstances of the case, it was proper to expend. If, on showing that 7000l. was paid to Sir Sidney Smith for his services when employed, half in a military and half in a diplomatic character, in Egypt and Syria, the honourable gentleman intimated that he did not think it an extravagant sum; on what principle could he say that there was due to Sir Sidney Smith's honour and character any explanation, but simply a statement on what ground the expences were incurred? Parliament being employed, under the recommendation of the speech from the throne, in making a provision for his majesty's household, the honourable gentleman suddenly interrupted them in the midst of the business: 'Oh, oh,' says he, 'here is an item of 7000l. to Sir Sidney Smith; I do not think the sum excessive; I do not want any explanation for our own satisfaction, but, for the purpose of clearing the honour and character of Sir Sidney Smith, pray, suspend all your proceedings, and arrest the progress of the bill at present under the consideration of the house.' The observations of the honourable gentleman on the expences to foreign ministers were all general, except those which related to Sir Sidney Smith, the Marquis Wellesley, Mr Arbuthnot, and Sir Arthur Paget." Mr Perceval further said, "he trusted, that whatever might be due to any other party, he had not left the character of Sir Sidney Smith exposed to any cloud or stain; and therefore the fine figure which the honourable gentleman so eloquently introduced of the debt of explanation due to Sir Sidney Smith on this occasion, might serve to wind up a magnificent period in the honourable gentleman's speech, but had no relation whatever to the subject before the house. The same remark was equally applicable to what the honourable gentleman had said of his

right honourable friend near him (Mr Arbuthnot.) The sum paid his right honourable friend was distinctly and simply a return for the expences and losses which he had incurred during the mission on which he had been sent. Before any jealousy was allowed to exist on these subjects, at least justice ought to be done to those who were connected with them. Did the honourable gentleman conceive it possible, that the affairs of a great nation, such as England, could be successfully carried on in such missions as he had described, if the individuals employed in those missions found themselves actually ruined in the discharge of the important trust reposed in them? Let the house consider the manner in which Mr Arbuthnot's mission terminated; he was obliged to make a precipitate retreat. The hostility of the court at which he was a resident rendered it necessary for him to do so. He was compelled to leave every thing behind him. Not a single article of the charge was there that had not undergone the strictest scrutiny by the treasury, and all that really was paid over to Mr Arbuthnot, was merely a fair return for the losses which he had inevitably sustained. When this occurrence took place, he and his right honourable friend were perfect strangers to each other. Mr Arbuthnot was not then secretary to the treasury; so that it could not be suspected that any undue influence existed favourable to his right honourable friend, but unjust to the public. These observations would serve as an answer to all remarks on missions abruptly terminated. It was but just that the individuals who suffered should successfully apply to the country for redress. If, however, any further scrutiny on the subject were thought necessary, let it be entered into, but let not the progress of the bill before the house be impeded by a circumstance so little connected with it. Another objection," continued Mr Perceval, "made to the measure by the right honourable gentleman, related to the manner in which the funds, granted to his royal highness the Prince Regent were left at his disposal. In the first place, he could not agree with the right honourable gentleman, that parliament were making final arrangements as for the Prince's coming to the throne. They were only making arrangements for the better management of the household during his majesty's indisposition; not a final arrangement as for the Prince's coming to the throne. It would not be dealing fairly with the house to say there was complete and utter despair of the king's resuming the royal authority; nothing existed to justify so dark and gloomy a view of the subject. If, therefore, parliament kept in mind the possibility of his majesty's recovery, they must also keep in mind the possibility of the regent's return to the situation of Prince of Wales. How, therefore, would they be justified, under such circumstances, in breaking down his exchequer revenue? It had been asked, If it was intended to constitute two privy purses? Certainly, it was intended to give his royal highness the Prince Regent a privy purse. To this the right honourable gentleman had no objection. Then as to the charges incurred during the present reign, it surely would not be right to encumber the regent with them, nor with the expences of the medical men, which the unhappy state of his majesty rendered it necessary should be about his person. All these charges would come with propriety out of the 60,000l. allotted to his majesty for such purposes. There was one point of the new arrangement, however, on

which both the right honourable and honourable gentlemen had thought fit to lay great stress. It was that part of the establishment which was reserved to attend on his majesty's person, and which was to be under the controul of her majesty. There were various objections to this part of the proposition. The first was to the extent of the establishment so reserved. It might be recollected, that on a former occasion he had stated it to be his opinion that the house would not do well if they provided in this respect, as if his majesty must remain in the unhappy state in which he was at present placed; and that they ought to consider the possibility of his regaining complete consciousness, even should he never be enabled to resume the reins of government. But he was accused of not having put questions on this subject to the physicians. There was no reason for putting them. They had distinctly stated that there were intervals in which he was capable of enjoying the society of his family.—("Not since July," from the opposition benches.)—That was true; but there was no reason to conclude that the thing was impossible; and when cases of a similar description were considered, it appeared that it was not less probable since that period that his majesty should recover the consciousness to which he alluded, than that before that period he should have recovered the power of being able to exercise the royal authority. If, therefore, the house at all took this circumstance into consideration, they must determine that something like the dignity of a king should surround his majesty, and surely that which was proposed was not too much for such a purpose. But the principal objection, it seemed, lay to this establishment being placed under the controul of the queen. The honourable gentleman affected to perceive in that circumstance symptoms of a continuance of that most determined and settled distrust of his royal highness the Prince Regent, which, according to him, had pervaded the whole of the propositions which he had thought proper, on a former occasion, to submit to the adoption of parliament. Now, really, if the honourable gentlemen opposite could find out any motive by which the most despicable and most foolish of men could possibly be induced, under the present circumstances, to evince a deep and marked disrespect towards, and distrust of, his royal highness the Prince Regent, he left them to enjoy their discovery. For his part, he was not conscious of any feeling in his own mind so absurd. But let the house see what those who were so tenderly anxious about the Prince Regent's feelings and character proposed. They contended, that because his royal highness was worthy of confidence, (in which he cordially concurred with them,) that therefore the whole controul of his royal father's household should be left in his hands. They thought this would conduce to his ease and comfort. For his part, he could not conceive a more invidious situation than that in which such an arrangement would place the Prince Regent, nor could he imagine any thing more revolting to his royal highness's feelings. The honourable gentleman opposite acknowledged that the care of his majesty's person ought to be entrusted to the queen. If, therefore, any distrust of his royal highness existed, here was distrust of the blackest kind. But, surely, if it was right that the person of his majesty should be placed under the care of the queen, it was also right that the attendants of his majesty should be placed under her majesty's controul; and he was persuaded that nothing could be more grateful to

his royal highness's feelings than that it should be thus arranged. The right honourable gentleman, however, seemed to think that he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) and those with whom he had the honour to act, had no means of knowing the sentiments of his royal highness, because of the restrictions under which he was placed. But he would ask the house whether, if his royal highness really thought that his ministers were insulting and degrading him, there was any thing in these restrictions, so soon about to expire, which would so restrain him in the exercise of the royal functions as to induce his royal highness not to withdraw the sanction of his authority from such servants? But if it were supposed that ministers were ignorant of the prince's pleasure, at least it ought not to be supposed that they would be so absurd as to propose any thing to parliament highly offensive to his royal highness. The house ought rather to believe that the subject had been submitted to the mature consideration of his royal highness; that his royal highness had been advised to adopt the plan which had been submitted to parliament; and that that advice had been accepted. No one could suppose for a moment that his royal highness was not as free to change his ministers, or that he did not possess as much authority in his councils, as if those restrictions which were so soon to terminate, had already expired. With regard to the situation in which his royal highness would have been placed, had the controul over his majesty's person, and the invidious task of doling out such a portion of the civil list as he thought proper, been committed to him, he had no hesitation in saying, that the situation in which the bill before the house would place his royal highness, manifested a much more delicate attention to his character and feelings. Had the other course been pursued, had it been proposed by him to transfer the whole controul to his royal highness, then he should have been told (and told with infinite justice) that it was casting an invidious task upon his royal highness, and laying by in order to have a future opportunity of insinuating that the royal father had been neglected by the royal son. What evils did not the honourable gentleman affect to see in this proposed establishment! What patronage! Four lords of the bedchamber! and all the pages! Then so many seats in parliament! and that was the retreat he had prepared for himself! This had been called a new court. As individuals surrounding the monarch, they were unquestionably a court. But there was nothing new in this. When his royal highness the Prince of Wales arrived at that period of life when an establishment became necessary for him, an establishment was formed, and parliament entertained no apprehensions of the influence which his court would occasion. Surely the constitution of England was not so nicely balanced that four lords of the bedchamber could overturn it, even with the addition of all the pages. He could not conceive that, either in or out of the house, there could exist on the one hand any rational apprehension as to evils which the co-operation of the two courts might be the means of occasioning; or, on the other hand, any rational apprehension of the inconveniences which the hostility of the two courts might be calculated to promote."—After some farther discussion in the future stages of these measures, in which there was nothing of novelty or interest, the plan originally proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer received in all points the sanction of parliament. Whoever reflects with candour and impartiality on this important measure in all its bearings,

a measure on which the opposition made a vigorous stand, and which they described as of the highest importance in a constitutional point of view, will be prepared to acknowledge the firmness and good sense displayed by the ministers. In the most critical circumstances, while their own destinies were uncertain, and their enemies were flushed with hopes never to be realised; when the nation had been anxiously taught the lessons of a narrow and pitiful economy, while it was, at the same time, warned against the insults which an ambitious ministry was offering to the royal authority, did these same ministers, at a small additional expence of the public treasure, combine a due regard for the comfort and dignity of an aged and afflicted monarch, with a suitable care for the splendour and magnificence of that illustrious character who was now to be permanently invested with the highest functions of the state. The prudent firmness of the ministers, in this as in other instances, obtained a complete triumph over the animosity of their opponents.

Some questions of considerable importance, and intimately connected with the establishment of the civil list, were agitated during the present session of parliament. It had been avowed by ministers, during the discussions on the household bill, that the deficiency arising on the civil list had been supplied partly out of a fund which is denominated the "Droits of Admiralty," and which had, from the earliest periods of English history, been vested in the crown.---The king, in ancient times, had a right to this fund as lord high admiral of England; and as that great office had not, for a century past, been conferred on any individual, the droits of admiralty remained vested in the crown. This fund is partly composed of the profits arising from the sale of wrecks of prizes, and of goods belonging to pirates; ships detained or taken previously to a declaration of war, such as come into port in ignorance that hostilities have commenced, and all those which become prize to non-commissioned captors, are sold, and the profits arising from the sale are thrown into this fund. Its gross amount, when the question, as to its appropriation, came before parliament, was 7,344,677l. From this sum, however, several heavy deductions fell to be made. The payments to captors amounted to 2,336,745l., to neutral claimants 406,554l., to the receiver-general of droits, law charges, &c. 289,691l.; various miscellaneous payments had, moreover, been made to the amount of 425,687l. Large sums had, also, been paid out of this fund to indemnify officers for the costs incurred in admiralty courts; the deduction on account of such payments, which, from the character of the late war, must have been considerable, could not well be challenged even by the most scrupulous economist. The balance, therefore, could not, at the period at which this question was agitated, amount to more than three millions sterling. This balance, however, was still considerable; and it deserved the consideration of parliament, whether the constitution placed it under the absolute controul of the crown.

From the earliest periods of English history, the maxim universally prevailed, that "all prize vests in the crown;" and very high authorities have declared, that prize is the very creature of the crown. Some old statutes, indeed, in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard III. have either omitted to mention prize as the peculiar property of the crown (an omission from which no inference can safely be drawn,) or have, in express terms, given all prize taken at sea to the captors. Great constitutional lawyers have also decla-

red, that the droits of admiralty, as well as all the other prerogatives of the crown, are granted for the attainment of certain specific purposes, and that the specific purpose in this case, is the guarding and maintaining the rights and privileges of the sea. Lord Coke thinks that tonnage and poundage were granted to the crown for safeguard of the seas, and that it pertains to the lord high admiral to see these droits administered; he qualifies this opinion, however, by stating, that the guard of the sea belongs not to the high admiral alone, but to private adventurers also, who fit out vessels for that purpose. But opinions of a date so ancient cannot be implicitly relied on with reference to the circumstances of the present times. In judging of the question, whether the droits of admiralty belong to the crown as matter of right, or are subjected to the controul of parliament, it is safer to look to more modern authorities. When the civil list was originally established in the reign of William and Mary, various rights and prerogatives of the crown were formally surrendered; and in all the acts re-establishing the civil list at the beginning of succeeding reigns, several branches of revenue, the exclusive property of the sovereign, have been collected into one aggregate fund, and named specifically as the surrender which the crown agreed to make in consideration of the civil-list granted by parliament. The principle of this arrangement is obvious; nothing was surrendered by the crown but what was specifically mentioned; and, as the droits of admiralty were not included in this specification, they were left of course with the crown on the same footing on which they had been formerly claimed. This principle has been recognised and acted upon at the commencement of each reign, from the Revolution downwards; and, in particular, by the act passed in the first year of the present king's reign, which settled 800,000l. on his majesty for life, several branches of revenue were collected into one aggregate fund, in which, however, the droits of admiralty were not included. The right of the crown, therefore, to this fund, seems unquestionable; and when we reflect, that, so lately as the commencement of the present reign, when the various funds out of which the royal expences were to be supplied had been carefully examined by parliament, the droits of admiralty were left with the sovereign in addition to the ordinary revenue of the civil-list, the fair presumption seems to be, that unless gross abuse can be made out in the application, the legislature has no right to interfere.

Mr Brougham, however, was either unacquainted with these facts, or chose to disregard them. He accordingly brought forward a motion, by which he tried to establish, first of all, that the crown has no right to the fund in dispute; and, in the second place, that even supposing the right to be proved, it is proper that it should be abolished by parliament. He considered the subject to be of the gravest importance, as it involved the consideration of the best privileges of the House of Commons; of that privilege, the power of granting or refusing the supplies, which is the great and only security that the people have in their representatives, against the influence and encroachments of the crown. He gave an exaggerated account of the value of these droits of admiralty, which he stated in round numbers to amount to no less than eight millions sterling, and enlarged upon the absurdity of allowing funds to such an enormous amount to remain at the disposal of the crown, without any act of parliament to controul the application. He

referred to the famous case of ship-money, which was argued in the reign of Charles I. and in which it was held, by the most eminent judges of that day, that all the natural profits arising from captures at sea, as well as the profits of lettres of marque, ought to be applied to the guarding and protecting of the national interests at sea, and could not, upon any principle, be considered as constituting a right by prerogative. He maintained, that even in the worst of times, not only parliamentary grants, but royal prerogatives, were considered as destined to the service of the country; and he quoted a *dictum*, which had been repeated by Sir William Scott in the court of admiralty, *capta bello cedunt reipublicæ*, and from this he inferred, that prizes must belong to the state, and not to the crown. That before the Revolution the expences of war were not regularly supplied by parliament, but generally by the crown from those very funds which were now described as the private property of the king; that parliament has often interfered with the prerogative of the crown, when that prerogative was turned into abuse,—that upon this principle the temporalities of bishoprics had been taken from the crown, when a shameful and lavish use had been made of them: That the principle of parliamentary interference with the royal prerogative, was recognized in the reigns of William and Mary and Queen Anne; and even in the present reign, an act had been passed which directed the commissioners of Dutch prizes to pay the prize droits into the bank of England, and not to the receiver-general of droits. That the mode of receiving and issuing the various sums which compose the fund in dispute, is quite unconstitutional; that the droits of admiralty are received by the registrar of the high court of admiralty, and remain in the hands of the receiver-general of droits, commissioners of prizes, and the bank of England, but never find their way into the exchequer; that the money is taken out of the bank of England in a manner which infers no responsibility—not only under the authority of the privy seal, but of a warrant under the sign manual only; that the fund under consideration is, perhaps more than any other, liable to abuse, and might be turned to purposes most detrimental to the real interests of the crown and of the country; that it gives the crown an interest in commencing hostilities in a way the least honourable to the nation, and the least consistent with that good faith, candour, and magnanimity, which form such proud features in the character of the English people, and that the fund in question is that from which the most worthless minions of faction will, in all probability, be remunerated; men, whom even the minister would not dare to place openly on the pension list with such names as those of Nelson, St Vincent, and Wellington.—That having thus urged his objections to the principles upon which this fund was left with the crown, he was not called upon to specify abuses which had actually occurred; but, at the same time, he could not help alluding to the great surplus of expenditure on the civil list, to the provisions out of the droits of admiralty which had been made to the princes, and to the large allowance granted to Sir Home Popham, all of which at least rendered the administration of this immense fund extremely suspicious. He concluded, by moving, that the possession by the crown of funds raised otherwise than by the grant of parliament, is contrary to the principles of the constitution; that it is the peculiar duty of the House of Commons to enquire into the nature of all such

funds; that the prodigious increase in the value of the droits of admiralty calls for the immediate interference of the legislature; that their amount is now nearly eight millions; that this enormous sum has been at the disposal of the crown, although parliament has made ample provision for the royal expenditure; and that the House of Commons, having taken these matters into consideration, will adopt the most efficient means for bringing this fund under the immediate controul of parliament.

In answer to these arguments it was justly observed, that the precedents and authorities which had been relied on to prove the right of parliament to interfere with the droits of admiralty, were all of a very ancient date, and prior to the Revolution; that, since that great event, there have been in the Commons House of Parliament many intelligent lawyers, extremely jealous of the prerogative of the crown, who have never questioned its right to the droits of admiralty; that it has been the practice for a century past to fix the revenue of the crown at the beginning of each reign; and as continual applications to parliament to supply the gradual increase of expenditure which arises from the depreciation of money and the increase of prices, would lead to great inconveniences, it is far better that a fund should be at the disposal of the crown from which deficiencies may be supplied, this fund, at the same time, remaining subject to the controul of parliament, which can always interfere to resist abuses in the expenditure. It was well observed by some members, that if a grant such as this of the droits of admiralty be incompatible with the constitution, so must all the acts which settle the civil-list revenue, since, by each of them, the legislature leaves at the disposal of the crown, property not immediately granted by the parliament.—That the clamour which had been raised about the excess in the civil-list expenditure was quite unreasonable; that the circumstances which had occasioned this excess were known to the whole country; and that even Mr Justice Blackstone, a writer not disposed to compromise the rights of the people, had acknowledged the insufficiency of the civil list to answer the claims upon it.—That the amount of the droits of admiralty had been very greatly overrated by those who supported the motion; and that it is highly expedient to have a fund of this kind at the disposal of the crown, with a view to some of the most important branches of the public service. Many cases may occur in which captors, acting with the most perfect *bonâ fides*, may commit errors, which, but for the interposition of that government so faithfully served by them, might overwhelm them with ruin. Mr Rose, in the course of the debate, mentioned a memorable instance of this kind. He stated, that the late Lord Nelson, then Captain Nelson, when stationed in the West Indies, soon after the American war, had actions brought against him for upwards of 90,000l. for having enforced the navigation act. The case of Captain Nelson was carefully investigated by government; it was found, that although he had acted with a laudable zeal for the public service, the proceedings instituted against him might have ended in his ruin; but the ministers wisely interfered to give him that support which he could never have received, if the droits of admiralty, the only fund applicable to such purposes, had not been at the disposal of the crown. Many such cases must occur in the course of the public service, which, from the constitution of parliament, could never be brought under its review.—As a question of right

therefore, this motion could not be supported; the right to the droits of admiralty has been vested in the crown for upwards of a century; and whatever may have been the opinions entertained at an early period, the various civil-list acts which have been passed since the Revolution, unquestionably continue this fund with the crown as a branch of the prerogative.—Whether it be expedient that this prerogative shall still remain untouched, and that the droits of admiralty shall continue at the disposal of the crown, subject however to the controul of parliament, when a proper case for interference is made out, is a different although not a more doubtful question. The history of parliamentary interferences with the royal prerogative, shews that it has not been usual, and is not of course constitutional, wantonly to trench upon any prerogative, until a case of abuse shall be clearly established; and, as it was not seriously pretended, in the present instance, that abuses existed, there could be no reason for acceding to the motion.—These arguments had their proper weight with the house, and the resolutions of Mr Brougham were accordingly negatived. He afterwards made an attempt to get a committee appointed to enquire into the alleged abuses of this fund; but the house negatived his motion.

Another subject connected with the arrangements of the household and of the civil list was brought forward by Mr Creevey. About the beginning of the reign of Charles I. a grant of the whole island of Barbadoes, then of very small value, was made to the Earl of Carlisle. During the troubles of the civil war and protectorate, however, many persons went over as settlers, and Barbadoes soon became a prosperous colony. The Earl of Carlisle died very much in debt, and his son transferred the grant of the island of Barbadoes to the Earl of Kinnoul. After the Restoration, however, the creditors of the Earl of Carlisle having made some claim on the island, which threatened to disturb the right of the settlers, a deputation of the latter came to England, and made a tender to the crown of certain rights and duties, on condition of their being secured in the possession of their property. The patent in favour of the Earl of Carlisle was accordingly surrendered; an annuity of 1000l. was settled on Lord Kinnoul; the property of the planters was secured against all challenge, and the right of the crown to the duties was established. It had been agreed, that these duties should be collected in the shape of an impost on the dead commodities of the island, at the rate of 4½ in specie for every five score; and the duties have since got the name of the 4½ per cent. Leeward Island duties. Part of this revenue was to be applied to local purposes in the island of Barbadoes, but the remainder was reserved to the king. In the reign of William III. this fund was recognised by two acts of parliament as part of the hereditary revenue of the crown; and although it was agreed, in the reign of Queen Anne, in consequence of an application from the colony, to apply this revenue to repair the fortifications of Barbadoes, no surrender of the fund, on the part of the crown, has ever been made, nor has parliament attempted to interfere with its application. At the beginning of the present reign, this fund, like the droits of admiralty, was reserved to the crown, and of course the prerogative right cannot well be questioned. Mr Creevey, however, was of opinion, that these duties were the property of the inhabitants of Barbadoes, and ought to be applied to colonial purposes: an opinion in which no one

concurred with him. He thought, at all events, that the house should resolve that these duties ought to find their way into the exchequer—that they ought to be applied in aid of the public expenditure, and not reserved as a part of the prerogative of the crown; but as this proposition implied an unnecessary and unjustifiable encroachment on the prerogative, he was not supported in his attempt to disturb it. He finally maintained, that the abuses in the application of this revenue called for parliamentary interference; but as he was unable to specify any such abuse, his motion for a committee was negatived.

The questions connected with the civil list naturally excited very great interest; and it is not wonderful that every effort was made to ascertain the nature and amount of the expenditure. A motion was accordingly made by Mr Eden for a select committee, to enquire into the charges on the civil list; and as ministers had nothing to conceal, they readily agreed to the proposal. A circumstance deserving of notice occurred in the course of the discussion. The charge on account of foreign embassies constitutes a very considerable branch of the aggregate charge upon the civil-list revenue; and in the accounts presented to the house, in consequence of the motion, large sums were stated for the mission of Mr Arbuthnot to the Porte, and of the Marquis Wellesley to Spain. It was strongly insinuated that many errors had crept into these accounts; but a short explanation was found sufficient to remove every suspicion. Mr Arbuthnot was present in his place as a member of the house to answer for himself; and Mr Richard Wellesley was prepared to explain every thing on the part of his brother. So minute and satisfactory were the explanations given by these gentlemen; so clear of all suspicion did the accounts of the embassies appear on the closest scrutiny; nay, so deeply was the public indebted in a pecuniary point of view, to those who had served it with zeal and ability, that men of all parties assented to the justice of the charge made upon the civil list on account of these distinguished persons.

A message from the Prince Regent was sent down to the House of Commons, recommending that a suitable provision should be made for the princesses.—By acts passed in the 18th and 39th of his present majesty's reign, the king was empowered to make a grant (contingently in the event of his majesty's demise) of 30,000l. as an annuity to the four princesses who were in life when the acts were passed. If the number of the annuitants should be reduced to three, each of them was to have 10,000l. a-year; if to two, 20,000l. a-year was to be divided between them; and if to one, the survivor was to have 12,000l. a-year. Such was the provision which parliament had enabled the king to make for the princesses in the event of his majesty's demise; but the melancholy circumstances which had recently occurred seemed to place their royal highnesses in the same condition as if the demise of the crown had actually taken place. The princesses had hitherto lived in family with their royal parents; but as they might now desire a change in this respect, and might even prefer to live separately from each other, it became necessary to make suitable provisions for them. It was proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that to each of the four princesses the sum of 9000l. per annum should be granted, exclusively of the grant of 4000l. from the civil list,—a sum which, as it was payable during pleasure, could not with certainty be relied upon. He proposed

also, that upon the death of one of the princesses, the survivors should receive the sum of 10,000l. per annum each; on the death of a second, that the two survivors should continue to receive 10,000l. each; and on the death of a third, that the sole survivor should receive 12,000l. per annum. By this arrangement, it was intended that the former resolutions of the legislature, with regard to their royal highnesses, should be carried into effect, making allowance for the change of circumstances occasioned by a fall in the value of money.

To a proposal, apparently so reasonable, various objections were offered. Mr Creevey was greatly alarmed by the proposition for charging this allowance to the princesses on the consolidated fund; and although he admitted that there was a large surplus of that fund, and that the public creditor was of course most amply secured, for the present at least, yet was he alarmed lest the fund might ultimately become inadequate to answer the demands which might be made on it. This view of the case was somewhat extravagant, and few of Mr Creevey's own friends ventured to support him in it; but he had another cause of complaint, which appeared better founded. He asked, Why this provision for the princesses had not been proposed when the house was engaged in a general settlement of the civil-list revenue? and added, that by bringing forward measures in detail for the support of the royal family, ministers were enabled to conceal the real state of the expenditure from the country.

Mr Whitbread took different ground in his opposition to the measure. He contended, that the 10,000l. which had so lately been granted to the queen, had been voted by the House of Commons on the supposition that the princesses were still to continue to live in family with their royal parents. But, in this view of the case, he had misunderstood the late arrangements; for it had been expressly stated, that the additional grant was to be voted to the queen, solely on account of the expense to which she might be put by the melancholy situation of the king. He thought that the allowances to the princesses might very well be paid out of the immense fund which had so lately been voted to the Prince Regent; although, when making this statement to the house and to the country, Mr Whitbread could not have forgotten, that the civil list, as transferred to his royal highness, was less by 50,000l. than that which had been enjoyed by the king.—Mr Tierney thought, that as there was no reason to believe that the princesses would not continue to live together, the proposed grant was extravagant; although he admitted, that if they should determine to live separately, the provision would be no more than reasonable. Mr Tierney thus in effect declared, that such a provision only ought to be made for the princesses as should confine them to a manner of life which they might find disagreeable or inconvenient.——Mr Ponsonby had still another reason for opposing the grant. His objection was, that the present measure would put the princesses in immediate possession of their provisions, while they had formerly obtained nothing more than a contingent right to them to become effectual on the demise of the crown. He forgot that their royal father had already lost the power of executing the intentions of the legislature in their favour; that as to them the demise of the crown had already in effect taken place; that the king's superintending care had been withdrawn from them; that it depended upon chance whether the provisions originally intended should ever be made

effectually and that the princesses were thus placed in a situation in which it would have been disreputable to the country if it had allowed them to remain. Some members of opposition pleaded against the grant, the abstract and barren principles of economy; as if a pension of 36,000l. a-year to four princesses were too much for such a country as England to bestow—as if another question could possibly have come before parliament to which this principle of economy might not, with more justice, and with far more delicacy, have been applied.

But the members of opposition who spoke on this subject, did not confine themselves within the usual limits of debate; they endeavoured to mix with the question before the house other topics with which it had no very obvious connection; and selected one upon which they believed that they might with more than ordinary advantage, press both the prince and his ministers. This was the first occasion on which they brought forward the differences subsisting betwixt the Prince and Princess of Wales. Mr Whitbread has uniformly taken a conspicuous part in the discussions connected with this subject; and it may not be improper, therefore, to quote the words with which he introduced it to parliament. "I have heard," said Mr Whitbread, "that the queen is about to hold a drawing-room, of course no hopes can now exist of his majesty's recovery; because if there were any, such a step, I presume, would not be resorted to; but in case that drawing-room is held, I would wish to know, is there to be any public appearance of the Princess of Wales? This is no private concern; the public have a right to demand why the acknowledged consort of their regent does not appear in public as such. No affectation of delicacy can be permitted to stand in the way of a nation's anxiety upon a question of such national importance. If any man can satisfy the public upon this topic, it is the right honourable gentleman, (Mr Perceval.) They know him to have been at one time the zealous adviser and devoted adherent to the Princess of Wales. They believe him to have conscientiously undertaken her defence—to have written her vindication—to have published it. That vindication is said to have involved in it an attack upon her royal consort. It is known to have been an attack upon his royal highness, and the regent's first minister is known to have been the author of it; and after he had published it, after it had been read by one and by one hundred, it was bought up at an enormous expence; bought up by the private secretary of the right honourable gentleman. I ask him now, Does he retain his former opinions of the unexceptionable conduct of the Princess of Wales? I ask him, If he did not lately, in this house, solemnly record his confirmation of that opinion; and if it is now what it was the other night, I call upon him to explain, if he can, his apparent desertion of her just claims to that respect, notice, provision, and consideration due to her. These are questions, which, as he values his own consistency,—as he values the character and claims of the princess, and as he respects the prince his master, he is bound to answer."

But the House of Commons did not give way to this mode of proceeding. Men of all parties could perceive that the condition of the Princess of Wales had no immediate connection with the provision to be made for the princesses; for they knew, that less than two months before, (while the regent had not yet declared himself in favour of his minister,) although the legislature

was then making ample provision for his royal highness, not a single murmur respecting the state of the princess was heard.—The bill for the provision to the princesses, which had been framed by the minister, was carried through its different stages, and received the sanction of the legislature.

which had crept into the ecclesiastical courts; but it does not appear that its proceedings were attended with any practical advantages. A similar fate attended commissions which were appointed in several succeeding reigns; and nothing was effected towards improving the constitution of these courts until the acts 26th Geo. II. and 27th Geo. III. were passed. Their constitutional canons were still nominally the same as they had been during the reign of Henry the Eighth; although it would be absurd to deny that the spirit of their proceedings had been softened by the improvements of modern times, and that they had participated to a large extent in the progress of refinement and civilization. Many of the persons who now preside in them are men of the very highest talents, and the most spotless character; but still there existed some absurdities in the constitution of the ecclesiastical courts, which it was important to correct or remove.

The punishment of excommunication, the only one which can be awarded by the ecclesiastical courts, and which, by the 5th of Queen Elizabeth, may be followed up by imprisonment, affords the most striking instance of the faults in their constitution. The consequences of a sentence of excommunication, according to the strict principles of the ecclesiastical law, are extremely serious: The offender is cut off from all civil rights; he is looked on as a heathen and publican; he can succeed to no inheritance, and can bring no action; he cannot be a juror or witness in a court of law; and if he die, he is not entitled to Christian burial. This punishment, although generally awarded in cases of defamation, was however incurred only by the contumacy of the offender, who, by submitting to a slight penance, might have avoided such severity; but the punishment itself was extremely objectionable as an abuse of a religious ceremony; and there could be no difficulty in finding a substitute for it, more efficacious and less oppressive. It was declared, in the House of Commons, by one of the greatest lawyers of this or any other age or country, who himself presides in the highest of the English ecclesiastical courts, to be the general wish of all who were connected with them, to have this barbarous and absurd custom abolished.

The attention of Lord Folkestone was attracted to this subject, by the case of Mary Ann Dix, a poor woman, who had committed some offence falling under the jurisdiction of one of the inferior ecclesiastical courts, for which she had been excommunicated and imprisoned. For this unfortunate woman his lordship presented a petition to the House of Commons, in which the circumstances of her case were very fully stated; but unfortunately, his lordship, in the course of the discussion, did not confine himself to those points in the practice of the courts which were really deserving of censure, but entered on a wide field of groundless accusation. He proposed that a committee should be appointed to institute an enquiry far more extensive and embarrassing than the occasion demanded. He complained not only of the punishment of excommunication, but of the heavy costs which were incurred in the ecclesiastical courts—a complaint which might, with as much justice, have been urged against any other court in the kingdom, and the statement of which could hardly be attended with any beneficial results, thus hastily brought forward, without notice or preparation. He spoke, in general terms, of enormous abuses which existed in the practice of these courts, although he was able

of the multitude of causes which come annually before such judicatures, to select but a very few in which there was the slightest appearance of blame. He pronounced a strong censure on the severity of the punishments inflicted in cases of defamation; and he called for an enquiry of such a nature, that, while it must have brought universal suspicion upon the ecclesiastical courts, would, in its progress, have subjected many persons to intolerable and unnecessary hardships. He was ably answered, however, by Sir William Scott, who, while he vindicated the general character of the courts, and resisted the expensive and useless proceedings which the house was advised to adopt, yet did not hesitate to concur in reprobating the punishment of excommunication. It was immediately suggested, that this eminent judge should bring in a bill for the purpose of abolishing this punishment; and, on the understanding that this would be done, Lord Folkestone withdrew his motion. Sir William Scott, on moving for leave to bring in his bill, thus explained the objects which he had endeavoured to accomplish. "In the first place, he had provided, that the process of excommunication should be discontinued, and in its place he had substituted the process *de contumaci capiendo*. He had next abolished excommunication generally, excepting in cases of great enormity. He had not thought fit to destroy it altogether, since, as every other establishment possessed the power of expelling its unworthy members, he did not think that the church of England should be placed in an inferior situation. The next provision was, that the civil consequences attendant upon excommunication should be removed, except in cases of incest and some others. The object he had next contemplated, was the abolition of a number of minor ecclesiastical courts, on the maxim, that improvement in jurisprudence is promoted by extension of jurisdiction. A number of clauses had been inserted for the purpose of removing the proceedings of the inferior tribunals into the diocesan courts. The qualification of the judges had then occupied his attention, and the remainder of the bill was occupied in making provisions relative to church rates and tithes. He had omitted, in this measure, two matters that some gentlemen might have wished inserted; his bill was silent on the subject of defamation; because, if the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts were taken away in matters of slander on the church, they would not be cognizable in our courts of law. All provisions regarding Ireland were also omitted, Sir William Scott professing himself not sufficiently acquainted with the constitution of the consistorial courts there. Under many circumstances of disadvantage, he had discharged the task imposed upon him by the house, with great diffidence, well aware of the magnitude and importance of the subject. If the house should adopt his bill, he should feel much pleasure; but if it disapproved of it, he would take leave of it without regret." It is hardly necessary to add, that the bill prepared and brought in by Sir William Scott received the sanction of the legislature. A very considerable improvement was thus effected in an important branch of the jurisprudence of the country.

The state of the currency had occupied the attention of parliament for some years. The disappearance of gold from the circulation had, in the first instance, induced Mr Pitt, with that daring spirit for which his measures were so remarkable, to suspend the cash payments of the Bank of England: and whatever speculative

opinions may be entertained as to the causes of the disappearance of the precious metals, few will now be disposed to doubt, that, in the actual circumstances of the country, this decisive measure had become indispensable. From the moment, however, that it was adopted, the footing on which the currency of the country hitherto stood was entirely changed; and as bank-notes were no longer, as formerly, convertible into gold, their value could not be regulated by the value of the precious metals, nor could the amount of issues issued by the bank be regulated precisely by the wants of the circulation. The immediate convertibility of the notes into gold, was that circumstance by which alone a real equality of value could, with certainty, be maintained, and the power formerly possessed by the holders of notes to demand payment of them in cash, was the only effectual check by which the directors of the Bank of England could be apprised of the over-issue and consequent depreciation of their notes. It was quite possible, therefore, and not by any means improbable, that after the restriction was imposed, an over-issue and consequent depreciation might occur; and when it was proved by a reference to the market price of bullion, and the state of the foreign exchanges, that a note of the Bank of England could no longer purchase the same amount of coin which it nominally represented, the evidence of this deficiency was complete. The evils arising out of this state of things were not less certain than the fact of the entire revolution which had been effected in the system of the currency; but, as often happens in cases of this kind, it was much easier to enlarge upon the grievance than to point out the remedy. A committee of the House of Commons had, in the year 1811, been appointed to enquire into the proofs of the depreciation, and to report their opinion as to the most suitable means of relief. They accomplished the first object of their labours, but failed entirely in the second and most important. In the state of the world at that eventful period, when all Europe was combined against England—when a war was declared upon her commerce, and the sources of her prosperity were seriously threatened—when it was doubtful whether she would, for many years, have that balance of trade in her favour, by which alone the precious metals could be restored, and when it seemed uncertain whether she should be able longer to carry on foreign commerce at all, it would have been no less unjust than absurd, to have compelled the Bank of England to resume its payments in cash. By the policy which government found it necessary to pursue, the bank had, in the first instance, been deprived of the means of paying in cash, and it was both a wise and an equitable measure, in such circumstances, to relieve it for a time of this obligation. A steady perseverance in the same system of policy still deprived the bank of all chance of obtaining the means by which alone cash payments could be resumed; and the legislature, therefore, could not, without the grossest injustice, have acceded to the proposal of the committee of 1811, to take off the restriction. But if it was necessary, in the circumstances in which the country was placed, to protect the bank against demands which it was now no longer in a condition to answer, another duty, not less important, was incumbent on the legislature—that of protecting the people against claims for payment in cash, with which the bank could no longer supply the holders of its notes. So

long as bank-notes were to form the only medium of circulation which the people could possess, it became indispensable that they should have the sanction of the legislature for applying these notes to the great use for which money is destined—the satisfaction of the demands made upon them by their creditors. For this purpose, a temporary act had been passed in the course of the last year, for making bank-notes in certain cases a legal tender; and it was now proposed by Mr Perceval, that the above act, with certain amendments, should be continued, and that its provisions should be extended to Ireland.

In support of this measure, it was said that the bill offered to parliament was merely an extension of the system which had received the sanction of the legislature last year—that no alteration was intended, except that payments of bank-notes, whether in or out of court, should be declared legal payments, to the effect of staying an arrest; and that the provisions of the statute should be extended to Ireland: That, since the passing of the former act, only three cases had occurred in the courts of justice, in which the legality of the tender was disputed; one of these was the case of Lord King, who had evidently brought the action for the purpose of trying the general question; that as the provisions of the former bill were not such as to have prevented any person from disputing the point, if he had not been disposed to acquiesce in the arrangements suggested by the legislature, the circumstance of so slender a resistance on the part of the people, shewed that they were in general disposed to concur in the measures which government had found it necessary to adopt.—That the only reason for not extending the provisions of the former act to Ireland was, that many Irish members were absent when the measure was brought forward; no doubt could have been entertained, however, by the framers of the law, that the circumstances of Ireland, equally with those of the sister kingdom, called for this remedy.—That although, in some districts of Ireland, a distinction was made by persons entering into contracts betwixt payments in gold and payments in bank-notes, yet such a practice was not general; but if any reason, such as this, were urged against extending the measure to Ireland, there would be the same ground for objecting to it in the case of England, where it was notorious that guineas were sold for a much larger sum than their nominal value.—That even in Ireland, the distinction alluded to had scarcely obtained for the last seven or eight years, except in the case of rents; and, with reference to this particular case, parliament would be called upon, should the act pass, to devise some remedy.—That by the measures which had already been sanctioned in parliament, tenants were placed in a very embarrassing situation; for although, by their contracts, they had bound themselves to make their payments in gold, they could never have had it in view that they might be under the necessity of purchasing gold at a premium of 25 per cent. which was its price at this time.—That there could be no reasoning from an enlarged experience as to the present money system of England; that no parallel case had ever existed in the history of the world; and so far as a short and limited experience, from the year 1797 downwards, could be the groundwork of any sound argument, an inference was fairly deducible in favour of that system which had been so strongly reprobated by some members of opposition.—That there was no reason to fear an inundation of bank-notes, from the imprudence or avarice of the di-

rectors of the bank; for during the last year, so far from an increase, a diminution in the circulation had actually taken place.—That the encouragement offered to forgery had been stated to be one of the great evils of a paper circulation; yet, in the course of a year, the amount of forged notes had not exceeded 10,000l. on a circulation of 2 ,000,000l.—a proportion not greater than that of the frauds which would probably have been committed on a circulation of gold coin to the same amount.—That, if the present money system of the country had a tendency to bring on the ruin which had been anticipated, it ought, to a certain extent, to have already occasioned distress and confusion; yet it would not be disputed, that during the last year, in which the measure now to be prolonged had been nearly in full operation, the foreign exchanges had improved—the amount of the public revenue had increased—and, in short, the commercial and financial affairs of the country had assumed a very favourable aspect: And, finally, it was urged that some measure of this kind was imperiously demanded, in justice to persons who might otherwise be called upon to make payments in a medium which they could not command, and which, even if they could procure it on any terms, must be purchased at a very great and unreasonable expense.

It was contended, on the other side, that the bill would prove fatal to the credit of the country. That the act of last year had been proposed as a mere temporary measure; that parliament had been induced hastily to accede to it from an exaggerated representation of the difficulties of the country; but that it was now called upon, without enquiry or deliberation, to adopt a measure of the most serious importance; to do nothing less, in fact, than to declare the notes of a mercantile company to be a legal tender. That one of the chief reasons urged in support of the bill passed last session, was, the rapidly increasing price of gold; it was now confessed, however, even by the supporters of the measure, that gold had since declined in price. That the bill, besides producing the most serious mischiefs, had failed entirely in attaining the only object proposed by it, viz. that of preventing gold coin from being sold at a premium; as a proof of this, it was mentioned that but one conviction had taken place since the passing of the act, and that too in a case in which the offender had been seduced into the transaction by a police officer employed for the purpose.—That the extension of the measure to Ireland was a bold invasion of the rights of the landed gentlemen of that country, who had in most cases specially stipulated for payment of their rents in gold, and were now to be violently deprived, without any fault on their part, of a ...th of their incomes.—That a measure by which the people were to be compelled to take in payment bank notes, the value of which could not be ascertained, amounted to a direct fraud upon them; and that the circulation of this country was now to be forced to a more alarming degree than that of the French assignats, which had always been supported by some sort of pledge on the national domains and the property of the state.—That there once was a time when the corporate interest of the bank coincided with the commercial and financial interests of the country; but they had now become perfectly distinct, and no security of course remained for the public, but in the forbearance of the bank. That the bank had become too strong for the government and the country; and the legislature, before sanctioning the measure now proposed, ought

to compel the directors to disclose what they had hitherto most anxiously concealed,—the amount of the profits which had been divided among the proprietors since the date of the restrictions.—That the system of a paper circulation was not new, but had, at one period or other, been introduced into most of the nations of Europe. Its invariable consequence had been to entail bankruptcy upon the government, and ruin and misery on thousands of innocent individuals.—That the temptations to forgery, created by such a system, formed, of themselves, an evil of an enormous magnitude, against which the bill made no adequate provision.—That although the bank directors might be incapable of abusing the trust reposed in them, yet the powers with which they were vested, were too great for them to wield, since they had no sufficient means of restraining the issue of their paper within due bounds.—That the only remedy for the present evils seemed to be an artificial rise on the nominal price of the gold coin, in the same proportion as bank notes had been depreciated; that this measure was not so novel as might be supposed, for, in fact, the price of coin had already been raised by the issue of tokens, at a rate above their intrinsic value, at which, however, they were received in exchange of those notes which were to be made legal tenders, and accepted in payment by creditors.—That by extending the measure to Ireland, government could have no other view than to destroy altogether the standard by which people are enabled to judge of the depreciation of paper; which standard, was, in some degree, maintained by the general circulation of gold coin in the sister kingdom.—That it was not fair to say, that the predictions of those who had expected much evil from the restriction of 1797, had not been fulfilled; for, although that utter ruin, which had been announced in the heat of debate, had not overtaken the country, yet, in so far as the system was calculated to produce immediate mischiefs, these mischiefs had already occurred. It was one of the predictions of those who opposed the measure of 1797, that the bank, so long as the restrictions existed, would never of itself return to cash payments; a prediction which had been fulfilled.—That the measure now proposed would convert the notes of the bank into a forced government paper, the very worst species of currency with which a country could be inundated.—A particular objection was strongly urged by some Irish members against extending the bill to that country. It was said, that leases were not granted in Ireland in the same manner as in England; that, in the latter country, they were usually granted for a short period, and the landlord of course had it in his power, after short intervals, to compensate himself, by raising the rents, for a depreciation of the currency; but that in Ireland, leases were seldom granted for a shorter period than two lives, and were very often of much greater endurance. The Irish proprietors, therefore, had not the same remedy with the English landlord, and it was unjust to extend to his case a measure, which, in other circumstances, might not be exceptionable.—These arguments, although urged with great zeal, proved ineffectual; a strong conviction prevailed, of the absolute necessity of the measure; and, although it was admitted on all hands, that inconveniences would arise, it seemed to be the general opinion, that the mischief was imputable, not to the measure now under consideration, but to a state of things over which parliament had no controul. It became necessary, however, to protect the people from the oppressions to which they might have been exposed, witho-

some interference of this kind; and the bill, as proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was accordingly passed into a law.

A subject of much importance, was, towards the close of the session, brought before the House of Peers by Lord Holland.—It may be necessary to state here, that there are various ways of instituting proceedings against delinquents by the criminal law of England; the forms of presentment by a grand jury; of information at the instance of a common informer; and of information filed officially by the attorney-general, are all in use. The first of these forms is adopted in all cases in which the life or limb of the subject is brought into jeopardy; and since, according to this ancient and favoured mode of proceeding, no man can be held to bail or brought to trial, unless a majority of a grand jury, composed of 25 of his countrymen, shall think his case such as to warrant an indictment, the greatest lawyers have, in general, given it a preference over both the others. In the second case, where the common informer is to prosecute, the accused is not held to bail till the informer shall appear in court, make oath to the truth of his charges, enter into recognisances to insist on the prosecution till it is brought to an issue, and find security to indemnify the accused for the costs to which he may be put, should the charges prove groundless. The third and last mode is, that by information filed, *ex officio*, by the attorney-general; a form by which the defendant is exposed to more than usual hardships, as he has neither the advantage of a grand jury, as in the case of proceedings by indictment, nor the chance of recovering costs, as in the case of information by a common informer. Informations filed by the attorney-general, however, are of very great antiquity, and are unquestionably constitutional; nor does it seem possible to dispense with them in certain cases, without endangering the public tranquillity. The greatest lawyers have admitted, that in prosecutions which have the preservation of the public peace for their object, and in all cases where delay might be attended with great public inconvenience, the proceedings by *ex officio* information, possess advantages over every other form, and are in many cases indispensable. Prosecutions in this form have accordingly been in use as far back as the history of the law of England can be traced. Lord Holland, however, seems to have thought, that if such proceedings were attended with advantages, they were productive of still greater evils; and although he was aware, that he had no reason to expect success in any attempt to abolish this form of proceeding altogether, yet he thought it right to endeavour to bring it under certain regulations. He therefore brought in a bill for providing that no information should be filed by the attorney-general, except within a certain short space after the offence had been committed; and that, if, after the information had been filed, the defendant should not be brought to trial within a limited time, all further proceedings should cease and determine. Various arguments were maintained in support of these propositions.

The projected improvement on the law of *ex officio* informations, said the advocates of the measure, although chiefly intended to secure the liberty of the press, has a more extensive object; for there are many other offences, besides that of libel, in which the attorney-general is authorised to prosecute *ex officio*.—The mode of prosecuting, however, for the offence of libel, by *ex officio* information, is neither necessary nor safe; it never has been considered by the highest authorities as the course which ought to be

resorted to on ordinary occasions, since the ancient and constitutional method of proceeding against libel as well as against other offences, is by indictment. If *ex officio* informations in cases of libel were altogether abolished, government and individuals would still have the same security against this crime, as the subject has for life, limb, and property.—But the bill did not pretend to abolish informations *ex officio*, but to bring them under proper regulations, as to the necessity of which, no doubt could be entertained.—That this mode of proceeding had always been exposed to great jealousy and suspicion; that in the different periods of English history, when the people were greatly harassed by vexatious and arbitrary punishments, the grand instrument of oppression was this very power, or something of the same nature. In the reigns of the first princes of the house of Stuart, this course was much resorted to, and became a favourite with the Star Chamber, to the temper and spirit of which it was admirably suited. The informations, filed at that unhappy period, were not indeed, strictly speaking, *ex officio*, but informations at the instance of common informers; but the principle was still the same, and the method of proceeding by the agency of common informers was found so convenient an instrument of oppression, that in the reigns of Charles I.. and James II. *ex officio* informations became almost obsolete. This is the reason why no measures were taken at the Revolution with the avowed purpose of abolishing *ex officio* informations, parliament having been satisfied with correcting the grievance which then pressed with the greatest severity. Now that the proceeding by *ex officio* information, however, had become so general, as to be almost the only mode adopted in cases of libel, the necessity for regulation was impetuous.—The power entrusted to the attorney general was peculiarly liable to abuse, and never was intended for active operation, except in cases of necessity, when the public peace might be endangered by delay.—That, in fact, this power had been extended far beyond its original limits; that it had been abused, and was likely to be still farther abused; that the attorney-general, as matters stood at present, had, in certain cases, all the powers of a grand jury; that he was thus enabled at his own discretion to put a fellow subject to great trouble and expense; that he might keep the prosecution suspended over the defendant's head for ever, and might, without trial, subject any one at his pleasure to a very heavy fine. The practical abuse of this power might fairly be inferred from a fact which was notorious; that although the attorney-general might in all cases, except those of treason and felony, bring it into operation, he had in practice thought proper to confine the exercise of it almost entirely to cases of libel, a species of offence which most readily excites the resentment of administration.—That by the power which the attorney general exercises in such cases of suspending or quashing prosecutions, according to the future conduct of the supposed libeller, the spirit and independence of political writers were destroyed, and the liberty of the press very seriously infringed.—The great increase of criminal informations of late years was calculated to excite suspicion From the year 1800 to the year 1807, the number of criminal informations filed was fifteen; from the year 1808 to the year 1810, forty-two (of which, however, more than half had never been brought to trial;) so that the average number for the three years last-mentioned, was to that of the previous seven years, as fourteen to two; and to that of the three years immediately preceding, as fourteen to one. Could it be be

lieved that all these cases were of such a nature, that a little delay might have been fatal, when it was considered that almost one half of them had never been brought to trial? If it was obvious, therefore, from reason, that this power was liable to great abuse, it seemed also clear from experience, that it had actually been abused. It became necessary, therefore, that it should now be brought under some sort of regulation.

To these arguments it was answered, that it was a great mistake to suppose that *ex officio* informations were not known to the ancient law of England, and had not been recognised in the freest times, and supported by the most respectable authorities. That the practice was as old as the time of Edward the First; that in a very remarkable case, that of the five members for detaining the Speaker in the chair, no doubt was entertained of the legality of the process by information; and in the famous case of Plowden, for absenting himself from parliament, as little doubt was felt on this subject; the only question having been, whether the offences of these persons were such that they could be tried by information.—That it was a mistake, also, to suppose that the attorney-general could at his pleasure file criminal informations against any person whom he might select for vengeance, since he is obliged to appear openly in court, and make his motion under the checks provided by a special statute.—So far is the proceeding by information from being a novelty in the law of England, that it was usual in former times for the attorney general and the master of the Crown-office, not only to file such informations, but to have writs issued for the apprehension of the parties. A case was referred to, in which the secretary of state had issued his warrant for the apprehension of a libeller, and the warrant was found good, after a grave discussion before some of the most eminent lawyers of whom England can boast. The same principle is still virtually acknowledged in the practice of the courts, as persons informed against, in such circumstances, are allowed to go at large only upon granting their recognisances.—That the legality and expediency of *ex officio* informations would never have been questioned, but for those unfortunate controversies as to the legality of general warrants, which occurred about the beginning of the present reign; the crown lawyers, in that instance, sustained a defeat, which has since inspired them with an unbecoming timidity.—That the proceeding by information appeared to be, in many instances, more convenient and humane than that by indictment. The defendant prosecuted on an information proceeding on the affidavit of an informer, may, if the affidavit should prove false, get the person who made it punished with greater ease, than if the same falsehoods had been sworn before a grand jury. That nothing can be more absurd, than to suppose the honourable men who are invested with the power of prosecuting for the public interest capable of condescending to the base practices to which it was insinuated they might be tempted to resort; and that as none but imaginary dangers could be discovered in the mode of proceeding by information, which has unquestionably been attended with great practical advantages, there could be no good reason for innovation.—But at all events, the provisions of the bill were exceptionable in every point of view; for while informations were still to be filed as formerly, the bill went to render the power thus vested in the crown perfectly ineffectual in many cases of the utmost importance. If the prosecution, as the bill proposed, must be raised in the space of three months after the

offence is committed, what must be done with colonial delinquents, what with those who may be dexterous enough to conceal their frauds for years, and what with libellers, whom it might be inexpedient or dangerous to try while the public mind is yet in a state of ferment produced by the very libel for which punishment is to be inflicted? The bill, in short, even if its principle had been good, was altogether defective in its provisions; while the changes which it did propose were highly absurd and mischievous.—The bill was thrown out by a very large majority.

The employment of foreigners in the British service had occasioned much clamour, and had furnished an excellent topic for the tribe of libellers, now so numerous in the metropolis.—The various acts by which the crown is empowered, under certain limitations, to avail itself of the assistance of foreigners, were severely reprobated; and it was strongly insinuated, that, dangerous as were the powers conferred by these statutes to the liberties of the country, the ministers had contrived to exceed them, and had thus very grossly betrayed their high trust. Declamations on this subject were well suited to the taste of the lower orders, who were carefully reminded of the jealousy which, at an early period, had been entertained against foreigners, and of the dangerous attempts upon the liberties of the people, of which strangers had been made the instruments. The authors of such inflammatory discourses were either unable or unwilling to make the proper distinction betwixt the past and present condition of England; they forgot, or concealed the fact, that, in ancient times, the sovereign possessed an authority almost despotic; that he was continually attempting encroachments on the slender privileges which had been extorted from his predecessors; that, as he often possessed extensive territories abroad, where the notions of civil liberty were little understood, the best instruments which he could employ for the purposes of tyranny, were foreigners, whom his independent revenue, not then subject to the controul of parliament, might enable him to take into pay. How great has been the change in all these particulars, every one must be satisfied who is capable of the slightest reflection. The government is no longer a despotism as in former times; the king, whatever interest a bad prince might suppose himself to have in secret attacks on national liberty will no longer dare to make such encroachments by violence; the revenue which supports the very considerable military establishment of England, is not hereditary to the sovereign, but is annually controuled by parliament; and, above all, the army is so numerous, and the proportion of British soldiers in it so great, that a small admixture of foreigners can never excite alarm for the liberties of the country, but in the minds of the most fanatical politicians.—The population of the British empire is much more limited than that of her most powerful neighbours; and, although it might justly excite alarm were the military spirit of the English so much reduced, that the ranks of their army were filled by foreigners in very large numbers, there seems not to be any reason, in the present circumstances of the world, for adhering to a system of utter exclusion. The enemies of England were, at this very moment, fighting her, not with their own population alone, but with the assistance of almost all the other states of Europe; and, if among the people of those conquered countries, some were to be found too high-minded to bend their necks under the yoke of oppression, would it not have been absurd in the British government to have refused

that aid which they willingly proffered, and of which the empire and Europe stood at this time so much in need?—Such were the considerations which led to the passing of the acts of the 36th, 39th, 40th, and 46th, of the king, by which the employment of foreigners in the British service is regulated; and, when their provisions are well understood, they will not only appear to be founded in a wise policy, but to have been faithfully executed by the ministers of the crown.

Such, however, was not the opinion of some members of opposition; and Lord Folkestone, with the view of founding charges against the government, moved in the House of Commons for a return of all foreigners serving in the army, with the exception of those serving in foreign corps.—The employment of foreigners in the British army was said to be unconstitutional, and had been considered as unlawful, until special statutes were made, authorising his majesty, under certain limitations, to take them into British pay. That there seems to have been at all times a desire on the part of government to introduce foreign soldiers into England; that ministers had, on a former occasion, been indemnified for bringing no less than 16,000 of them into this country; and it was not improbable, that, if circumstances should occur to render it expedient to withdraw the foreign troops then in the British service from the places where they were stationed, another bill would be proposed to indemnify ministers for bringing in a much larger number. That this is an alarming consideration to all those who are concerned about the liberties of their country; that the act of the 36th of the king, did not justify the employing foreign soldiers, except in foreign corps, and did not warrant the appointment of German generals to British regiments; yet instances of this kind had lately occurred. That a practice had also crept in of admitting foreigners into our own native corps,—a practice which outraged the best feelings of the country, and which, in cases where the interference of the military might be required to suppress disorders in the interior, exposed the persons and liberties of the people to the mercy of men who have no sympathies and no feelings in common with them. Reference was made to the terms of Magna Charta, and to some transactions in the reigns of Elizabeth and Charles the First, from which it appeared, that the strongest jealousy of foreigners had been entertained and acted upon by the government and the people; and it was added, that however perilous the situation of the country might be, it was better to trust to the constitution and to the native energies of the people, than to the mercenary soldiers of other countries, which had been conquered almost without a struggle, because the people had exhibited neither valour nor patriotism in defence of their independence.

It was maintained on the other side, that all discussion and enquiry must be superfluous in this instance, since the subject had been already, on various occasions, under the consideration of the legislature, and solemnly determined—That no inference could be safely drawn from periods of English history, which bore little resemblance to the present; and that every thing which had been done by government was amply justified by the statute 46th of the king, the provisions of which had altogether escaped the supporters of the motion. By this statute, it was enacted, that it should be lawful to admit into the British service such foreigners as should be desirous to enlist; and a power was also given to grant commissions and letters of service to foreign officers and engineers. It followed, from this enact-

ment, that if such persons should distinguish themselves, they might be promoted according to their deserts,—a principle which could not be abandoned without the grossest injustice.—That the foreigners admitted into the British service could never exceed the number of 16,000; and of these a large proportion were employed abroad; that when this number was compared with the aggregate amount of the whole British army, it seemed quite whimsical to talk of danger to the liberties of the people; that, at all events, as the law stood, the ministers were perfectly justified in what they had done to fulfil its provisions; and if the act itself were really considered to be dangerous or impolitic, the proper course would be to move for its repeal, and not to throw an unjust censure on those who had done their duty by executing it, so long as it continued to be a part of the law of the land.—The motion was negatived without a division.

The subject of corporal punishment in the army,—a subject of great delicacy and deep interest, was twice brought forward in the course of this session; in the first instance by Sir Francis Burdett, on the third reading of the mutiny bill; and again by Mr Bennet, in a specific motion for official returns, to shew the frequency of its infliction. That the practice of flogging soldiers is disagreeable and disgusting to all who are connected with the army, and that the continuance of such a punishment is an evil which nothing but extreme necessity can justify, were freely admitted on all sides; and upon this, as on many other occasions, much of the declamation of the reformers might have been spared, since it was exhausted on topics on which there was no difference of opinion.—That it must always be disagreeable to recur to the lash in the discipline of the army; that the punishment of flogging is both severe and degrading, would have been admitted by all, even without those unnecessary exaggerations in which Sir Francis Burdett is apt to indulge; and the only question, therefore, on which the parties were at issue, was a question not of declamation, but of reasoning, which might well have been referred to the understanding, without any aid from the passions. It was simply this: Whether, from the known habits of soldiers, it would be possible to preserve discipline without a punishment of this character and severity; and whether any other punishment could be devised of equal efficacy, and less repugnant to the feelings of humanity? Sir Francis Burdett, however, and his friends, said very little on this topic; they disdained to think or talk of any substitute for a punishment which they contemplated with abhorrence; they declaimed at great length on points about which there could be no dispute, and repeated all the stories respecting the practice of flogging, which their zeal and industry had enabled them to collect. They did not care much for examining the authority on which such stories were circulated; it was enough that they were such as to raise a strong feeling of disgust in the mind of the hearer, and to impress a general belief that the British army is governed by a tyranny more fierce and capricious than has ever before existed in the world. Every man who sincerely wishes to see the punishment of flogging abolished, or who is desirous to have it put under such regulations as may alleviate the sufferings of the soldier, must regret, that a question so delicate, with reference to the discipline of the army and the stability of government, and, above all, so interesting to humanity, should have fallen into the hands of Sir Francis Burdett, the warmth of whose feelings so frequently overpowers the

higher faculties of his mind.—He began, by stating, that he was about to deliver his sentiments on the practice of "*flogging*,"—for he did not choose to denominate the punishment by a circumlocution, and to call it "corporal punishment," as those persons are accustomed to do who are ashamed to give it its proper name, although they are not ashamed to defend and practise it :—That any other punishment, short of death, might be inflicted with much greater advantage than that of flogging : and even death itself would be to many less severe :—That the punishment of flogging is stamped with peculiar infamy by the civil law of the land, which places those who have suffered it on a footing with persons who have been convicted of the most disgraceful crimes, and considers them as so infamous that they are unfit for the discharge of the most important functions of citizens :—How the practice of flogging had first been introduced into the army, it is difficult to ascertain; but, like all other bad punishments, it had gradually become more and more severe, till at last it was carried to extremities at which humanity shudders : That the practice, however, is not ancient ; since, in the time of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth, military offences were tried by the same tribunals, and were punished in the same manner with other offences :—That it had formerly been usual to dismiss delinquents from the service as a disgrace; but this is no longer done, since it is considered as an advantage to get out of the army. Parliament had been told, that the punishment of flogging was now less frequently inflicted ; and, in proof of this, a list had been laid before the house of the punishments awarded by general courts-martial ; but there was no proof that flogging had not been frequently inflicted by regimental courts-martial, of whose proceedings no accounts had been presented :—That even if it were impossible to dispense altogether with the punishment, its infliction ought to be regulated, and the offences on which it may be visited ought to be pointed out with precision : That it ought never to be inflicted in the army except for crimes, which, by the civil law, would bring on the offender the same suffering and ignominy :—That so degrading a punishment ought not to be inflicted upon men who have so lately astonished the whole world by their valour : That the best regiments in the service are those in which flogging has been discontinued : That much might be done towards rendering it unnecessary by the care of the officers to check offences on their first appearance ; and, above all, that the British soldier ought to be encouraged by high rewards, rather than intimidated by cruel punishments :—Even the punishment of death would be attended with this advantage over flogging, that men would not condemn their fellow-creatures to the loss of life on light and insufficient grounds ; whereas they may often condemn a man to be lashed without giving his case the grave consideration which it merits :—That it is singularly barbarous to continue the flogging, as is often done, from time to time ; and that the amount and degree of the punishment frequently depend on the caprice of the commanding officer, or the officers composing the court-martial ; —that it is an insult on the army to say that this punishment cannot be dispensed with : That the loss of men, which would be sustained by the more frequent infliction of capital punishments, is far more than compensated by the horror which the practice of flogging diffuses throughout the country, to the great prejudice of the recruiting service :—That the regiment of his royal highness the Duke of Gloucester, which is one of the fi-

nest in the service, although the practice of flogging has been for sometime abolished in it, affords a practical refutation of the arguments urged against the proposed alteration of the law; and that many excellent officers, such as Generals Stewart, Money, Sir Robert Wilson, and Lords Moira and Hutchinson, all men of great experience, had expressed their marked disapprobation of this mode of punishment.

The members who spoke on the other side, were anxious to confine themselves to the topics more immediately connected with the question before the house, as they justly conceived that the extreme delicacy of the subject called for more than usual circumspection.—It was well observed that an appeal had been made to the hearts rather than to the understandings of members; to their passions rather than their reason. That however conscientious the motives of the honourable baronet, there was no reproach which the British army would repel with more disgust and impatience, than the description which he had been pleased to give of the situation of the soldier. What! was it true that a British soldier was subject only to punishment? Was he entitled to no reward? Was he in a worse state than an African slave? There were no assertions so untrue, nor so much calculated to incense the feelings of the British army. Opinions had been hazarded not founded on any enquiry. It had been said, that no soldier who underwent corporal punishment could ever raise his head again among his friends and companions; but it would be found, that in many regiments soldiers who had suffered proper corporal correction, so far from having become worthless, had afterwards conducted themselves in a most exemplary manner. That the hon. baronet was not justified in coming down to the house, and, uninformed as he was, broadly stating, that punishment was invariably followed by the self-abandonment of the soldier on whom it had been inflicted.——Nothing could be more ridiculous than to suppose, that after the house had read, for the third time, a bill, which recited corporal punishment as intimately connected with its provisions, they would agree to tack to it a clause, by which corporal punishments should be wholly abolished.—That the statements made relative to punishments actually inflicted, had been grossly exaggerated. That it was necessary to confide in the discretion of the courts-martial; that the best security the soldier could have was in the humanity of his superiors; as it was owing to that high-minded and liberal feeling which guided the conduct of officers, that the condition of the men had been so much improved.—In foreign armies, where corporal punishment was not inflicted, there existed what was still more degrading to the men—a system of wanton and capricious ill-usage.—Trial by courts-martial was governed by the strict principles of justice, and therefore could not be said to destroy the energies of the men; and corporal punishment was not coeval with the present war, as had been asserted, but had always existed when the army was called into action.—The soldiers in our service had great rewards to look up to; not only might they rise to be non-commissioned officers, and afterwards be advanced to the rank of ensigns, but they might even rise from the ranks to be generals; and, instead of being in a miserable condition, were better paid, clothed, and attended to, than the soldiers of any other country in the world.—That the continuance of corporal punishment was a necessary evil; and although the dissemination of truth was not dreaded, the misrepresentations that had been employed

were inexcusable. There had formerly been cases where the punishment was partially inflicted at one time and completed at another, but the modern practice had been directly the reverse; and it would have been well, therefore, if gentlemen, before they drew such a picture of the repetition of the punishment of flogging for the same offence, had enquired whether the practice was continued. The question of its legality had been submitted to the judge-advocate, and he had pronounced it unlawful. Why then was such a representation made, when grounds for it no longer existed? —It was likewise true, that in some regiments corporal punishment was more frequent than in others; but the obvious reason was, that it was more deserved.—Would the production of documents throw the faintest light upon any of the cases which had been selected? One objection to laying the account called for upon the table was, that it would point out particular regiments in which more flogging was inflicted (although deservedly) than in others, and would hold up the officers commanding such regiments to the odium of the army, and of the whole country. The number of corporal punishments would appear, but the grounds and merits of each case would remain out of sight; and rather than put officers thus unfairly upon their trial, it would be far better at once to make a new law.—Nothing but the most trying necessity could justify the discussion of military affairs by the legislature, and yet the present was the third or fourth time that gentlemen had volunteered to introduce the subject during the present session. To this it was answered indeed, that resistance to the motion provoked the discussion. But gentlemen finding they should not have the documents required to debate on a future day, had taken this opportunity of declaiming, not on the point before the house, but upon the general question of the propriety of flogging in the army.—The honourable baronet had repeated now, what he had before stated, that because we had a local militia, Great Britain was a flogged nation. It might as truly be said that we were a hanged nation, because all were subject to the criminal laws; and doubtless the honourable baronet (as well as others) could point out many individuals who, on this account, would wish this punishment also to be abolished; and it might be urged too with truth, as had been done with respect to flogging, that many persons had hanged themselves rather than undergo the same ceremony by the hands of a public executioner.—The clause proposed by Sir F. Burdett as an amendment on the mutiny act, was negatived; and the motion of Mr Bennet was also negatived by a great majority.

While these minor improvements were thus anxiously discussed, the great question of parliamentary reform—that question which had occupied the most powerful minds, and divided the most illustrious statesmen of this country, was not neglected. Mr Brand brought forward a motion, which had for its object a partial and limited reform; and which, without giving the slightest countenance to the "radical reformers," as they call themselves, sought only the disfranchisement of the smaller boroughs, which are without wealth and without population, and the admission of copyholders to the exercise of the elective franchise. The motion was not supported by much novelty of argument, or brilliancy of illustration. The following is an accurate outline of what was urged on this occasion.

It was said, that the day of alarm had gone by, and the question of re-

form might now be dispassionately discussed, without any fears for the safety of the constitution. All questions that pointed at reform were viewed by many with a certain degree of apprehension; and when such questions were agitated, the people were commonly alarmed, by being told to look at the countries on the continent, now prostrate at the feet of a military despot. A false and groundless alarm was thus raised which arrested the progress of every improvement.—Perhaps, it might be said, why press a measure like this upon the house, when it was notorious that the people at large were indifferent about it? But the people were not indifferent. Were there not petitions upon the table from the city of London, from the city of Westminster, from the counties of Middlesex and Essex, and from other places, praying for a reform in the representation of the country? The necessity of some reform had been also, in various other ways, uniformly and strongly pressed upon the attention of parliament. But even if this were not the case; if there existed no such expressions of public opinion upon the subject, yet certain statements had been made to that house, which loudly called upon it to enter upon the discussion; which should make the desire of reform a natural impulse of patriotism in the bosom of every member, and which rendered it a duty imperative upon the present House of Commons, beyond what it had been at any former period. It had been stated by a member of that house in his place, that ministers openly and avowedly adopted the most corrupt practices in order to obtain seats in parliament for those who would vote in support of their measures. A motion, founded on this charge, had been rejected, because it was thought unfair to proceed against individuals for offences which had become so common. At that time statements were made, so disgraceful, that the Speaker himself pronounced them to be such, that "our ancestors would have started with indignation" at them. And yet, notwithstanding these statements, parliament had gone on, without effecting any salutary alteration; thus leaving the people to form the dangerous opinion, that their representatives were attentive to their own interests, but utterly regardless of the rights of their constituents.—Admitting the universality of the practice alluded to, it was only an additional reason why the question should be entered into by parliament; instead of which it seemed to be, unfortunately for the country, neglected with a sort of sullen indifference, or left to the zeal and industry of individuals who propose remedies, which ought rather to originate in the combined wisdom of the legislature:—That the great danger which threatened the constitution, arose from the number of members returned by places which were now uninhabited and desolate, or which possessed so few inhabitants, that it was a mockery to continue to them the elective franchise: That no one contended against the fair right of property in influencing the representation of the country; but it appeared, according to the facts which had been collected, that one hundred and eighty-two individuals returned, by nomination and otherwise, three hundred and twenty-six members to that house.—There were also above seventy placemen in the House of Commons, and above forty persons who were returned on either side, by what was denominated a compromise.—That although it was difficult to find expressions which would adequately convey the feelings excited by such disclosures, yet the members of the House of Commons had, by their decision in a late case, voted themselves a full, fair, and free representation of the country! But,

how could this be, when, upon the most moderate computation, there were two hundred and ninety-two persons among them so brought in, that they could not exercise a full and fair discretion upon any subject brought under their consideration? Would any person pretend to call such a representation a proper one? And yet a House of Commons so composed was returned for seven years.—With regard, indeed, to septennial parliaments, objectionable as they were in principle, the act which authorised them could not be repealed, unless some mode of limiting the expence of elections were previously adopted. Fortunately, however, such a mode was now in contemplation. A noble lord had moved for leave to bring in a bill, the specific object of which was to contract the enormous expences which now attended an election to serve in parliament. That measure, if carried, would ultimately lead to a plan which would prevent the long suspension of communication between the constituents and their representatives.—The septennial act, indeed, was a manifest violation of the principles of the constitution; for if the parliament had the power to vote for itself a duration of seven years, there was no reason why it might not have voted itself perpetual. What plea could be urged in defence of such a step, except perhaps that of expediency; yet it must be inexpedient that there should be such a suspension of intercourse between the representative and the electors. It removed that wholesome check upon the proceedings of a member which a frequent return to his constituents would create. If any proof were needed of this, it would not be difficult to produce it; and as one sort of proof, that the expectation of soon meeting their constituents was a necessary check upon members, the lists of names on some recent occasions might be referred to. —Such being the evil, the remedy must be found. Here it was natural to expect that there must be doubt and difficulty, but, generally speaking, the leading steps to such measures would be, first, granting to copyholders a right to vote; and, secondly, abolishing the right of nomination, so as to generalize the right of voting, and thereby more fairly to proportion the number of representatives to the extent of the population of each place represented. A monstrous disproportion at present existed; since many depopulated, desolate boroughs returned as many members to that house as the whole county of York; while Manchester, Birmingham, and other opulent towns, returned not one member to parliament.—Great as were the evils resulting from the present inadequate system of representation, it would be better to submit to their continuance than propose for them a remedy not to be found in the ancient constitution of this country. The remedy suggested, was to be found in that constitution, and would be rather a restoration than a change. It was idle to say, that the extension of the right of suffrage would weaken the influence of property, since, whether that right was or was not spread out over the population, still property would, and must, have its natural influence. But it was wrong, that one hundred and eighty-two persons should regulate and command votes in the House of Commons; it was revolting, that seats should be bought and sold in open market for immense sums, when it was clear that the only profit to be derived from them was the usurpation of the rights of others; above all, it was disgusting, that persons who came home loaded with the wealth of either Indies—persons used only to the treatment of slaves, should have the power of nominating members to the House of Commons. It was proposed,

then, by Mr Brand, to get rid of nomination, and to expand the representation of the close boroughs into a more enlarged representation of the populous counties.—The boroughs, which Mr Pitt, in the early and purer part of his political life, made such efforts to abolish, were said to amount at that time to thirty-six in number. These, it was well known, were made mere articles of commerce, common conveyances for the transfer of the rights of Englishmen from one borough-monger to another.—It had been suggested, in conformity with the ancient practice of the constitution, that these boroughs might be thrown into the hundreds; and as to the objection that the poor voter would be more accessible to corruption than the rich borough-holder, where was the difference between the poor man taking a bribe of five guineas for his single vote, and the rich man accepting as many thousands for nominating to a seat in that house; unless it was, that in the former case the corruption went no farther than the abuse of a single vote, while in the latter the nominator had for his money a power to dictate to the crown, to the minister, and to the people?—One part, therefore, of the plan was, to bring in a bill for the abolition of those boroughs, which were now known to be as common articles of trade as the woollen of which our coats are made; from the abolition of these boroughs, and the consequent appropriation of a more extensive suffrage to the populous counties, would arise an equalization of members from the different parts of the empire. As to the other part of the proposed remedy, that of admitting copyholders to the elective franchise, this question had been much agitated in the middle of the last century, having been started in the county of Oxford. It was in the course of this controversy that Sir William Blackstone wrote his able treatise on copyhold tenures; and that eminent authority was clear as to the constitutional right of copyholders to vote.—The immediate object of Mr Brand was to repress the system of nomination; to prevent the disgrace that a House of Commons should be constituted and influenced by an oligarchy, and bow in obedience to the directions of a portion of the monied interest. There was now scarcely any person who contended, that the representation of the people was either preventive of corruption, or efficacious against the inroads of the crown. It was always in the power of the minister to cover every enormity by his majorities. The object of the proposed measure was not to innovate, but merely to restore the constitution to its former state; not to break down, but to build up those fences which had become necessary to its protection.

Mr Elliot spoke against the motion with much force and eloquence; but the speech delivered on this occasion by the honourable Mr Ward, exhibits so masterly a sketch of the leading arguments on this great question, and is in every point of view so valuable as coming from a man of his political principles, that there is no other way of doing justice to the great cause of the constitution, which he sustained with such distinguished ability, but by giving a place to this fine oration. After some apologies for joining in the debate, he proceeded.—"Sir, I well know, that if I undertake to argue against this favourite measure, I must do so in the face of great authority, living as well as dead; I must do so in opposition to the recorded opinion of a great majority of those with whom I usually act; I must do so at the risk of incurring some odium, and at the certain loss of that share of the public favour, which an opposite line of conduct, even when pursued by the humblest abilities, is now almost

certain to obtain. For, sir, it unfortunately happens, and it is by no means the least of those disadvantages with which we have to contend, that though, as in my conscience I believe, truth and sound reason are with us, all those specious arguments, and all those splendid topics of declamation that address themselves with most force and effect to the popular mind, are ranged on the side of our adversaries. It required no great skill in the reformers to enlist in their favour some of our soundest principles and some of our strongest feelings. The great mass of society, who love liberty and who hate corruption, are naturally inclined towards a project which they are continually told, and with very little contradiction, is to extinguish corruption, and bring the principles of freedom into more decided and more extensive operation. All hasty views, all first impressions, are in favour of reform; and we must discuss this question under the disadvantage of having to oppose reason to passion, and of endeavouring to divert men's minds from vague hopes and delusive promises to the cold dry maxims of prudence and experience.

"And, sir, if the reformers had been contented to avail themselves of those advantages, which fairly belong to the cause they have espoused, however much I might have regretted that such advantages should exist, I should not have thought myself entitled to object to the use of them; but I think I have a right to complain of the manner in which this question has been treated, not indeed within the walls of this house, but in almost every other place in which it has been discussed. Sir, if there ever was a weighty and delicate problem in politics—if there ever was one which might fairly divide the opinions of wise and good men—if there ever was a question that ought to be treated calmly, dispassionately, and without reference to mere personal or temporary motives, it is this. And yet, sir, how have the reformers proceeded in all their numerous speeches and writings? Why, no pains have been spared, no arts have been left unpractised, in order to fix upon the enemies to the measure the most odious and the most despicable motives. We have been represented in almost every sentence as the patrons of corruption, the enemies of freedom, the shameless interested advocates of a system alike repugnant to common honesty and to common sense. Sir, I had rather discuss this question without reference to the motives that may be supposed to actuate either party; but if I were compelled to enter into that consideration, I should do so with reluctance indeed, but without apprehension; nor should I be afraid to challenge, for the enemies of the measure, as strict an investigation into character and motives, as may be thought expedient for themselves by the most strenuous advocates of reform. Perhaps, indeed, the charge of sinister intentions may not only be repelled, but retorted; and we may venture safely to ask, Whether the history of all mankind, whether our own history in particular, but more especially, whether the history of the times in which we have ourselves lived, does not shew that if the friends to the ancient order of things are liable to the imputation of corruption and profligacy, and hostility to the principles of freedom, those that aim at great changes, and adopt high popular courses, may not, with as much reason, be suspected of a mean desire to catch the applauses of the mob, of endeavouring to obtain, by their violence, that share of reputation which they never could have acquired by worthier means, of mounting to power on the shoulders of those whom they mean afterwards to

betray, of a low vanity, and of a cruel, desperate, and unprincipled ambition. '*Ut imperium evertant, libertatem prætendunt, postquam evertere, ipsam aggrediuntur.*'

"But, sir, without entering further into this most unpleasant part of the subject, on which I only touch defensively, and for fear I should be supposed to acquiesce in the justice of those imputations which I had passed over in silence, I shall proceed shortly to state the grounds upon which I shall oppose this motion.

"Every person that has attended at all to the history and progress of this question, must have remarked that there are two separate grounds upon which the plan has been rested,—that of right, and that of expediency. Since the failure of that great reform, called the French revolution, which proceeded almost entirely upon speculative principles, the doctrine of abstract right has been in a great measure abandoned. The tremendous example which that event exhibited to the world, has indisposed the minds of men towards a doctrine so fruitful in calamities and in crimes, nor, so far as I know, has it ever been directly and avowedly made the foundation of any argument in this house. The petitioners indeed proceed upon both grounds, but first and principally upon that of theory. They state some practical grievances; but by far the greater part of their objection to the present constitution of parliament is of a purely speculative kind; for when they have once shewn, in the sense, and generally in the very words, of that celebrated petition which was, prepared by my right honourable friend near me in the year 1793, and which has served as a text-book to all subsequent lecturers upon the same subject, when they have once shewn what nobody denies, that a very large majority of the house is returned by a very small minority of the people, and that the crown and the nobility exercise a very considerable influence in it, they think they have made out an unanswerable case, and that they have nothing more to do than to exercise their talent for invective, against the house itself and all its defenders. Sir, I shall not take up your time by going into the merits of this argument, because I am persuaded that there are but few indeed among those whom I have the honour to address with whom it will have much weight. To them it is unnecessary to prove that the House of Commons neither is, nor ever has been, nor ever ought to be, framed upon a purely democratical model, and that a certain influence, both of the crown and of the nobility, in an assembly which has in a manner absorbed the whole power of the state, is absolutely necessary, in order to save both from utter destruction; and that, consequently, the only question is, as to the degree of influence that ought to exist. All I wish is, that gentlemen should keep the nature, extent, and unavoidable operation of this principle, if it is once admitted, clearly before their eyes, and particularly to point it out to the attention of those who are inclined to adopt what is called a moderate reform, and who believe that the bulk of the reformers would be satisfied with any thing short of an utter subversion of the whole system.

"In the few words, therefore, with which I shall trouble the house, I shall consider this question in that point of view in which it has been considered by the honourable mover, and by all its most temperate and most judicious advocates, and by those who, from their character and talents, are most likely to influence public opinion, that is as a purely practical question; and I shall direct my attention to the arguments, not of those who think that

men have an abstract right to this or that particular mode of government, but of those who, without reference to any such doctrine, imagine, that the condition of the country would be ameliorated by a change in the representation The course of reasoning which they have adopted is completely different, much less alarming in appearance, much less revolting to the friends of our constitution, but quite as fallacious in its principles, and quite as mischievous in its tendency. They begin by grossly exaggerating the evils that exist under the present system; they ascribe them all to that system; and they conclude by recommending parliamentary reform as the safe, certain, easy remedy for them all.

"Now, sir, in the first place, I must beg leave to remark, that the way in which the reformers have overstated the public grievances, affords no very favourable specimen either of the goodness of their cause, or of the temper in which they are disposed to discuss it. Indeed, some of the doctrines that one has heard upon this subject, exhibit the most remarkable instance with which I am acquainted of the power of a heated imagination in blinding men to facts, which every moment experience seems, in a manner, to force upon their attention. The more violent part of the reformers have treated the constitution and government of this country, as if they were speaking of Spain, or Turkey, of the Divan or the Cortes; of a system so incurably vicious, that every thing was to be gained, and nothing to be lost, by a change. How the present order of things may appear when tried by any new test, or measured by any new standard of ideal excellence, I know not; but sure I am, that if it is compared with any thing that is, or with any thing that has been, it can only gain by the comparison. I know no better test of the excellence of a constitution, than the happiness of the people that live under it. In estimating that happiness in any country, one is naturally led to compare it with other countries, and with itself at other periods; and if, upon examination, we find, that for the last century it has gone on increasing in prosperity; if the last twenty years, notwithstanding the pressure of continual war, have been years of the most rapid, visible, and essential improvement; if, turning ourselves towards other countries during the same period, we find them torn by anarchy, crushed by despotism, or desolated by foreign conquest, we shall not, I think, be inclined to come to any very hasty conclusion against that order of things under which we have exclusively enjoyed so many blessings; we shall perhaps be still less inclined to do so, when we call to mind that some of those nations, the internal condition of which we now regard, and justly regard, with wonder and compassion, have been made the subject of some political experiments, conducted by as able hands as any that are likely to be employed in the business of reform here, and from which as much good was as confidently predicted, as any man can now venture to anticipate from a change in the constitution of England. Sir, I do not mean to insult the good taste, and waste the time of the house, by declamations upon the excellence of our constitution, or the happiness of the people; I merely wish them to keep in mind, that the object of reform is not, because it cannot be, to restore us to any state of happiness from which we have fallen, nor to place us upon a level with wiser and happier nations; but that what these gentlemen pretend to accomplish, and that for which they wish us to place every thing upon the cast of a single die, is to elevate us to a state of poli-

tical purity and excellence, of which we at least know thus much, that it never existed, nor does exist, in this or in any other nation upon earth. At the same time I am not disposed to carry the argument that arises out of this circumstance farther than it will fairly go. I am perfectly aware that it is bad reasoning to say, that because we have a good constitution now, because the people are tolerably happy, and because, on the whole, we are better off than our neighbours, therefore no attempt ought to be made to improve the constitution, or to render the people still happier. The history of our own country would be a sufficient refutation of such a doctrine. There was a time, for instance, before the constitution of England had attained to that pitch of excellence to which it was afterwards carried, when with the royal power still undefined, with the courts of Star Chamber and High Commission still existing; in spite of all these blemishes, our constitution was better than that of any other country in Europe. Yet that neither did prevent, nor ought it to have prevented, all those glorious efforts for its amelioration which have rendered it superior to any form of government that ever existed in the world. Nor do I even contend, that excellent as it now is, it has attained to the utmost possible pitch of perfection, or, in other words, that we enjoy all the happiness that positive institutions can confer. But as often as we hear those exaggerated and mischievous statements of the public grievances, which, by appealing to the prejudices and passions of the multitude, tend to disgust them with the whole existing order of things, so often must we be permitted to remind them of their real condition. Whether or not the constitution of this country has defects, which it is possible to remedy, is another consideration; but this much is certain, that we enjoy a measure of tranquillity and happiness unknown to any other country in this stormy and disastrous age; that we have hardly tasted that cup of bitterness which has been drank to the very dregs by the rest of the civilized world; in short, that we are in a state in which much can be taken away from the stock of public happiness, and in which little can be added to it; a state, therefore, in which we may well pause before we adopt any great, radical, and uncertain change.

"I say we ought to pause only, because all that I contend is, that the actual excellence of our constitution, and the happiness of the people that live under it, affords a *prima facie* case in favour of things as they are, against things as they may be. And I am the more anxious to be clearly understood upon this point, because it is one upon which the argument against reform has been most frequently and most successfully misrepresented. It has been a very common accusation against us to say, that we are actuated almost entirely by one great leading principle—the dread of innovation; a principle, in the extent in which it has been stated, most absurd, and which the friends to the measure have accordingly been at great pains to ridicule and to refute. Now, sir, though I by no means deny that there are persons who do entertain this general dislike to every species of change, and who must, of course, concur with us in opposing so great a change as parliamentary reform; and though I am no more disposed to reject their aid than the moderate reformers appear disposed to reject the aid of those that carry their views upon this subject to the most alarming extent, yet I must beg leave to insist, that this is no doctrine of mine, nor one of which we stand at all in need as the foundation of our argument. In almost all those principles that have been so frequently and so triumphantly stated in de-

rence of innovation, I completely concur. I am perfectly aware, that whatever is institution now, was innovation once; and therefore, that to object generally to innovation is to object to art, to science, to law, to every thing that has dignified, and to every thing that has adorned mankind, and not least of all to that very constitution which I am most anxious to uphold. All I would ask, is, not that innovation should be considered as an evil in itself, but merely that it should not be considered as a good in itself; that, before we adopt any change, we should reflect, calmly and dispassionately, what is the real amount of the evil which it is designed to remove; and, in the next place, how far it is calculated to remove it, without substituting some greater evil in its stead. So far, I trust, I shall carry along with me the opinion of all sound-judging men, and that without being considered as an alarmist or a bigotted and indiscriminate enemy to every species of change, I may be allowed to consider the actual prosperity of the country, (so far as it goes,) not indeed as a conclusive argument against reform, but as a circumstance which renders the necessity of that measure less urgent, and the advantages of it more questionable.

"Before, however, I quit the subject of innovation, I must beg gentlemen to bear in mind, and it is a consideration most material in forming a correct opinion upon this great question of reform, that whatever may be the result of the experiment we are called upon to make, be it good or be it bad, it is in its nature final. If, when this fundamental change in the government of the country has been adopted, instead of its being attended by those beneficial and splendid consequences, which the promoters of it now so confidently anticipate, we should discover upon actual trial, that the share, both of freedom and happiness, which we had enjoyed under the old, rotten, corrupt constitution of England, was greater than any that we had been able to realize under the newer and purer system, still, however much we might wish it, and however bitterly we might repent of our folly and precipitation, still we should seek in vain to re-establish the ancient order of things, and we might wait through whole ages of turbulence and calamity, till a combination of circumstances, too fortunate, perhaps, to occur twice in the history of any nation, should have restored us to those speculative defects, which afford matter for the invectives of mistaken, factious, and visionary men, and to those practical advantages which diffuse happiness over millions. They call upon us, sir, to put off from shore in search of what, they tell us, is a more genial climate and a more fertile soil; but if we do so, let us at least not forget, that it is under this inexorable condition, that we shall never return, even if, upon our arrival, we find that this promised land of theirs is cursed with irremediable barrenness and perpetual storms. Therefore, if there is any person, I will not say, who thinks that this experiment will fail, but who doubts of its success, and who, doubting of its success, is not of opinion, that any failure is preferable to a longer endurance of the present evils, upon him I think I may fairly call to give his most strenuous opposition to these projects.

"But, sir, fortunate as our situation undoubtedly is in itself, and still more fortunate when compared with that of other countries, still it must be confessed, nor do I at all disguise from myself in the consideration of this question, that there are circumstances in that situation which are calculated to excite anxiety and alarm. Persons may differ in their estimate of grievances and dangers, but that grievances and danger do exist, it is im-

possible to deny; and it is therefore for us to consider, how far that change in the government of the country which is now proposed, is calculated to afford to us ease and security.

"Sir, the great evil, as I apprehend, and that which is the root of all the present discontents, is excessive taxation, which taxation has arisen from the war. Now, sir, I happen to be one of those who think that the war was undertaken originally upon insufficient grounds, and that many opportunities have been lost at which it might have been terminated without danger or disgrace; and I have always regarded the continuance of it (up to a very late period) as the capital mistake of every cabinet by which this country has been governed for the last eighteen or nineteen years. But, sir, I am utterly at a loss to understand how the war could have been prevented by a change in the constitution of parliament. That, indeed, might have been said with truth, if it had been begun and continued by the executive government, in conjunction with this house, and against the will of the nation. But, sir, be it right, or be it wrong, a question which this is not the proper occasion to discuss, this war always has been, and still is, the war of the people.

"But then, sir, it has been said, that though national ambition would still occasion wars, those wars might be managed with greater regard to economy, and that infinite waste and profusion which now prevail in every department, might be prevented by the vigilance of representatives, whose interests were more closely united with those of the people. And this, sir, is the opinion which most deserves consideration, since it is undoubtedly to it, right or wrong, that the cause of parliamentary reform now owes the greater number of its proselytes. For some years past, the subject of pecuniary abuses has become so popular, that it has almost entirely overwhelmed every other consideration. The great question of peace and war; those questions that arise out of the management of the war; those that relate to the character and conduct of ministers; all these things have, in a manner, lost their interest, whilst the public mind has been absorbed in economical details. When more millions were wasted in one year upon the most absurd and most disastrous enterprises, than all the plans of economy that human ingenuity can devise, or human integrity can execute, could save in ten, the people of England comforted themselves in the hope of reducing the petty perquisites of a few miserable offices; and they looked with cold-blooded indifference upon the loss of whole armies sacrificed to the incapacity of their government, a few months after they had been employed in canonizing the authors of discoveries about female influence in the disposal of a commission.

"It is evident, that the utterly disproportionate share of attention which these objects have occupied, that this low and inadequate state of the public mind, is owing to the grossest and most malignant misrepresentation, both as to the amount of abuses and as to their cause. Persons have not been wanting ill-informed enough or ill-intentioned enough to tell the people that a great part of the burthens under which they labour are the result of peculation; and yet when the authors of all these clamours have been put to the proof, all they have been able to produce has been vague declamation, unwarranted suspicion, and the repeated enumeration of the few instances which the most vigilant attention has been able to detect. That abuses do exist I am far from meaning to deny; indeed it would be absurd to suppose, that a revenue, so vast as ours, raised by such compli-

cated means, and expended upon such complicated objects, is not liable to fraud, both in its collection and in its disbursement; or that the public income can be managed through all its branches better than any individual can manage a large private fortune, though stimulated by motives of personal interest, and enjoying over his property and his agents that permanent controul which is so material in forming and in perfecting economical arrangements, but which, for reasons better than any that can arise out of mere economy, the ministers of a free country neither can nor ought to possess. How far peculation may extend, I do not pretend to be accurately informed; but I am yet to learn the reason for supposing that it has reached to such a height as to call for a change in the government of the country; or even for thinking that parliament, as it is now constituted, is not fully capable, I will not say of extinguishing it utterly, but of reducing it to its minimum.

"But, sir, this subject of abuses adapts itself so admirably to the understandings and feelings of those to whom it is addressed, and to the particular circumstances of the times, that it is impossible to flatter oneself that it would not produce a considerable effect. On the one hand, people labouring under great and increasing burthens, are very apt to give credit to any body that promises them speedy and certain relief; on the other, it was quite natural that the reformers should be desirous to see some share of the popularity belonging to this question reflected upon their own favourite topic, and to connect together, in the estimation of the public, the subject of economical reform, with that totally different species of reform which consists in a fundamental change in the constitution of this country; for if they could once persuade the people, in the first place, that they are suffering neither from the consequences of their own pride and folly, nor from the pressure of external causes, obviously out of the controul of any change in the external administration and government of the country, but from the corrupt management of the revenue; and if, having persuaded them of this, they could, in the next place, convince them, that the corruption itself was owing to the defects in the representation, their cause was evidently gained. But, I apprehend, that they have not only very much exaggerated the evil, but that they have totally mistaken the remedy. For, sir, I would fain ask, in what way is parliamentary reform likely to occasion any improvement in the financial administration of the country? Would it insure greater integrity in the immediate and confidential servants of the crown? No person, I am sure, who is at all acquainted with the subject, will maintain, that it would, or even that it could, produce any such effect. For I will venture to say, that there never was any age or country in which the higher class of public men was more completely pure from the stain of corruption than in this. And this is no trifling advantage which we enjoy under the present system, bad as it may be; that though the government of the country may fall, and, as I think, has often fallen into the hands of persons, on other accounts utterly unfit for so great a task, yet, through every change of party, and under every combination of circumstances, it has always remained inaccessible, except to spotless and unsuspected integrity.

"But then, sir, might not the house itself be more vigilant, and do more to guard the public against the depredations of persons in subordinate stations? I know very well, that for some years past, it has been very much the fashion among a certain description of

politicians, to represent parliament either as conniving at abuses, or at least as taking no effectual steps in order to remove them. Now, sir, I apprehend the fact to be, that parliament has completely gone along with the improvement that has taken place in the public feeling upon this subject. It requires very little knowledge of our history in order to be convinced, that there never was a period during which parliament has laboured more diligently or more successfully in order to extinguish, not only abuses, but every species of unnecessary expense, as during the last thirty years. I need not mention Mr Burke's bill, the many reforms introduced during the administration of Mr Pitt, the labours of the committee in which you, sir, took so distinguished a share, the various parliamentary commissions, and more lately the committee of finance. And then, sir, let us compare these with what have been sometimes called good days—with the time of King William and Queen Anne, and we shall see such a scene of profligacy in the members of this house, and of corruption in those that had the management of the public money, as will make all the most notorious delinquencies that have been detected of late years, appear only in the light of venial transgressions. Now it is worthy of remark, in the first place, that all these things happened in the time of triennial parliaments, a very favourite nostrum with some of those who call themselves moderate reformers; and, in the next place, that all this corruption and venality never appears to have suggested the idea of parliamentary reform to any of the great men of that age—and no age ever produced greater men, or warmer and more enlightened friends to liberty—all this infamy, I say, transacted before their eyes, never seems to have suggested to them the idea of having recourse to such a remedy as a change in the very frame and constitution of parliament itself. And it must be confessed that the lot of parliament would be very singular, not to say a little hard, if after having passed unhurt through times of comparative profligacy and corruption, it should be destroyed at the end of a period through which it has gone in a continually accelerating pace towards the extinction of abuses, if it should at last be overwhelmed by the public indignation, and declared to have filled up the measure of its iniquity; at a moment when it is undoubtedly far purer in itself, and a far more faithful guardian of the public purse, than it was in those days when it was not only unassailed by any domestic enemy, but regarded with envy and admiration by all Europe, as the most splendid model of a popular assembly the world had ever seen.

"Is it ability? is it disposition? is it the means of enquiry that are wanting in the present House of Commons? None of these, as I apprehend. The house contains a large proportion of acute and vigilant persons, whose eyes are constantly directed towards this object; no minister dares refuse, even if he is disposed to do so, of which I am very far from suspecting the right honourable gentleman opposite me,—no minister dares refuse information in those instances where his consent is necessary in order to obtain it; and any discovery, or feasible plan of retrenchment, is sure to be immediately attended by such a share of importance and popularity to the discoverer, as ensures a proper degree of attention to an object which so well rewards the promoters of it. In one very material point, I will venture to say, that this house is very superior to any reformed house—that is, in ability to carry plans of retrenchment into effect. Whatever merits any schemes for parliamentary reform that I have seen may have in other respects, and however much they may differ from each other, they all

agree in this; that they have a tendency to diminish the number of men of business in the house; of men, who, from their education and habits, are likely to bring to the investigation of financial questions, that skill and attention, which, more perhaps than almost any other subject, they require.

"On the whole, there cannot be a more absurd, or a more pernicious opinion, or one which it is more the duty of every real friend to his country to combat, than that it is possible, so long as the present war lasts, to make any perceptible reduction in our expences, or to relieve the people from any part of their burthens. Reformed, or unreformed, we must continue to make enormous sacrifices in order to maintain that awful struggle in which we are engaged; fortunate, indeed, if we do not increase to an intolerable degree those evils which the present course of external events seems to be preparing for us, by our own internal dissentions, and by tampering with that order of things, under which, in the undisturbed enjoyment of domestic tranquillity and happiness, we have been enabled to make efforts unequalled even by the convulsive energy of revolutionary warfare, and to bear up against difficulties, untried, nay, unthought of by our forefathers.

"Sir, the next great evil under which, as I conceive, we labour; an evil connected with, and arising out of the other, is the enormous influence of the crown. And undoubtedly, those persons who, agreeing with the right honourable gentleman opposite me (Mr Rose,) think that this influence, far from having exceeded its proper bounds, is only just sufficient to carry on the government, argue the question of reform to much greater advantage than those who, still unconvinced by his pamphlet, think that it has reached to a height which may give reasonable ground of jealousy even to the firmest friend to the monarchical part of our constitution. But, sir, though I perceive the full extent of this evil, though I acknowledge that this influence exists, and though our attention to its existence has been most powerfully drawn of late years by the manner in which it has been abused, yet I see nothing in all this that should incline me to parliamentary reform.

"If, indeed, the influence of the crown consisted entirely in the disposal of certain offices held by members of this house and their connections, a reform in parliament (or even a place bill) would prove a very effectual check to the evil, as the house would then have more to fear from the resentment of the people than it would have to hope from the favour of the crown. But unfortunately this influence is so extensive that it reaches not only to the house but to the people itself, and acts quite as powerfully upon the constituent as upon the representative body. Our establishments are so enormous, and such a vast proportion of the whole population of the country eat the king's bread, that there is hardly any educated person that may not hope either directly, or through his connections, to become an object of royal favour. It is quite natural that people in this situation should be desirous that some share of the political power which the constitution enables them to delegate, should be exercised to their own advantage; I do not mean to their own advantage on any liberal extended scale of public utility, but to their own private benefit, emolument, and promotion. The real wish of their hearts is, not for an able independent representative, but for an active useful agent, some person that may represent them not merely within the walls of this house, but at the door of the treasury; a channel through which some rivulet from the great stream of patronage may be drawn to fertilize

their own native spot. The only bad votes, in their view of the case, are those that disqualify the voter from becoming a successful suitor to those in power when any revenue officers are created, when an incumbent drops off, or when a son is to be provided for in the civil or military service of the honourable company. They care mighty little for the distant result of wise measures and free government, when set in opposition to immediate tangible benefit to themselves and to those in whom they take an interest. Patriotism, they think, is no bad thing, and they have heard something about the necessity of watching and even opposing the ministers of the crown. But these advantages, like all others, may be paid for too dear, and cannot be much regarded by those who look to the favour of the government to assist in providing for their families. They have no natural preference to a weak administration or a bad measure, but they had ten times rather the administration should be supported, and the measure justified by a majority of this house, than that the course of jobbing should be interrupted for a single day. An elector looks much less to the vote of his representative, than to the good things he has obtained, or is likely to obtain, for himself or his neighbours; and for the purposes of a sure re-election, a morning well employed in Downing-street, is worth many an evening spent in this house.

"To hear the language of many persons upon this subject, one would really imagine that in all those instances in which the decision of this house had appeared most questionable, the majority had consisted entirely of the nominees of peers, and members for rotten boroughs overpowering by a dead weight of profligate votes a virtuous minority of county members and representatives of large towns. Now, sir, every body must know that this neither is the fact, nor any thing approaching to the fact. If, for instance, I might without irregularity arraign any vote of this house, it would undoubtedly be that which was given in vindication of the expedition to Walcheren. And yet even from the result of that memorable devision no inference whatever can be drawn as to the question of reform. Quite as many of the real representatives of the people voted for the minister as against him, nor do I see any reason to suppose that if parliament had been dissolved the next day, any gentleman would have found reason to repent of the support which he had given to those persons who still enjoy the favour and dispense the patronage of the crown.

"And so long as that patronage remains undiminished, so long this evil will remain without a remedy. Indeed I cannot help thinking, though I am well aware how uncertain all predictions must necessarily be as to great political changes—I cannot help thinking, that, as things now are, a reform in parliament would be more likely to increase than to diminish the influence of the crown. By stripping [illegible] tocracy of their boroughs [illegible] very much diminish the [illegible] the scale—it would diminish [illegible] which has hitherto been, and [illegible] still is, the great, steady, effectual [illegible] terpoise to the influence of the crown—a power which, according to the vulgar theory of the constitution, they ought to exercise only within their own walls, but which, according to a practice coeval probably with the very existence of parliament, and which may be most clearly traced through the happiest and most brilliant periods of our history, they have, with the most salutary effects, exercised by what are invidiously called their nominees in this. Indeed I do not see how any person can consider the present state of the country, and call to mind from

what quarter it is, that all substantial opposition to the will of the crown has for many years proceeded, without being persuaded that the best chance we have of resisting its encroachments, is afforded to us by the preservation of a large share of political power in the hands of those persons, who, from their wealth, their dignity, and a certain hereditary attachment to the principles of free government, are less liable to those daily increasing temptations, which have already proved too strong for the great mass of less considerable individuals.

"Parliamentary reform, then, would not relieve the country from either of the great evils under which it labours. And here perhaps the argument might fairly rest, since no man is so zealous an innovator as to think, that we ought to have recourse to any great change without a prospect of effecting some essential good. But then I maintain that when we have stated this, we have stated only the least considerable part of our case, and that there is the strongest reason for believing not merely that reform is incapable of producing any good, but that it would give birth to great and irremediable evils.

"Among the greatest evils arising from parliamentary reform, I do not hesitate to class the immediate effect it would give to the will of the people upon the votes of this house, and consequently upon the decisions of the legislature, and upon the measures of the government. For the reasons I have already stated, I am inclined to think that the crown, in the present state of patronage, would find as little difficulty in managing a reformed as an unreformed parliament—that is, in the ordinary course of measures which would be much less accurately discussed, and much less vigorously opposed than they are now. But then it must be recollected that occasions now and then occur, on which the people are very violent; and when they are very violent they are in general very wrong—occasions on which all other considerations give way to a momentary passion, and the great mass of society assumes the character and feelings of a ferocious ignorant mob. They clamour for peace when peace would be disgraceful—they ask for war when war would be impolitic or unjust—or they desire to persecute some religious sect, the followers of which are filling the ranks of their army and navy. It is on occasions like these that we feel the advantage of having a House of Commons which speaks the sense of the people, not from day to day, but from period to period, which accommodates itself (as has been well said) to the average, and not to the fluctuations of public opinion, which is the faithful portrait of the national character in its ordinary attitude of dignity, sedateness, and repose, not the mirror in which those transitory but disgusting forms are reflected, which it assumes when under the dominion of ignorance, prejudice, and passion. But it may be said, and, I believe, with truth, that these delusions never last long, and that however wrong it may be for a time, the public is sure to recover its senses at last. But in the mean time the evil may be done, and done irretrievably. We may have plunged into a disastrous contest, we may have made peace upon ignominious terms under the pressure of temporary difficulties, or we may have inconsiderately swept away some of our most valuable institutions. That the public opinion and wish ought ultimately to prevail, I most readily admit—it is a doctrine that lies at the very foundation of all free government. But what I maintain is, that the House of Commons, as it is now constituted, expresses that opinion in a more eligible and a more authentic manner than it could be expressed by a reformed house. Indeed

I would almost be content to give up the whole cause at once, if a single instance could be produced in which this assembly, corrupt as it may be, has ever acted for a long time at once in contradiction to the will of the people of England. What the present composition of parliament enables us to do, is not to act in opposition to that wish, but to wait till it is clearly, strongly, and finally expressed, to separate the real permanent sense of the people, from their hasty passing impressions, and to keep up that right of appeal from present passion to future judgment, which is necessary in order to preserve us from all the horrors and absurdities of democratical government.

"In the next place, the project of reform, if carried to any considerable extent, would completely put an end to that regular, systematic discussion of the measures of government, which, if all the notions we have entertained on the subject for the last hundred years and more, are not completely wrong, is essential to the well-being of the country, and forms an indispensable ingredient in our free constitution. This discussion is conducted, as we see, under great parliamentary leaders, that is, by persons who bestow all their time and the very best abilities on this object, and who, under the present system, are nearly certain of always obtaining a seat in this house. That certainty is in a manner essential to the formation of such characters; for what person—at least, what person of that description, would throw away his time and his talents in qualifying himself for a situation from which mere accident might exclude him through all the best part of his life? And yet one of the objects of any such reform as would satisfy the petitioners, is to put an end to every thing like permanence and stability in the situation of a member of this house. As it is, no great party is ever so completely crushed by another as not to retain all its principal organs and spokesmen in this branch of the legislature, and not to remain as a watch and a check upon its opponents. If every election depended upon popular feeling, any party that was once fortunate enough to raise a successful cry against its opponents, might drive from within these walls every individual that was at once able and willing to discuss its measures, and reign undisturbed till a new election gave a new turn to affairs. At the time, for instance, when the present ministry came into power, it would have been very difficult by method of popular election to secure the return of Lord Howick. Still, was it just, nay, except in a moment of phrenzy and intoxication, was it the wish of the country, that at the end of a brilliant career of near twenty years, that distinguished statesman should be deprived of every opportunity of contributing to the deliberations of this assembly that wisdom and eloquence, which no man will deny him to possess? Mr Windham too would probably have shared the same fate, and yet I would have ventured to ask his most determined political enemy, even before his death had mitigated all feelings of animosity in every liberal mind—whether it would have been creditable to the house, or useful to the country, that popular violence should exclude from these walls, the most accomplished gentleman of whom England could boast? It is one of the most important duties of a public man to oppose vulgar prejudices, and to stem the tide of popular opinion when flowing in a direction contrary to reason and justice—a duty which is already rendered sufficiently painful by the unavoidable discouragements of odium, calumny, and misrepresentation, that attend it. But if, in addition to all these, it is to be visited by a total exclusion from pub-

lic life, small, I am afraid, indeed, will be the number of those endowed with the heroic courage and self-devotion which the performance of it will then require. Human virtue is too feeble for such a task.

"And this, sir, leads me to mention the change in the description of persons composing this house—a change which, in my judgment, we ought rather to depreciate as an evil than to wish for as a blessing. If the reform were carried to any great extent—which, if it is once suffered to begin, it will undoubtedly be—the house would consist, almost exclusively, of men of great landed estate and their connections, who would sit for the counties; and of persons that had acquired influence in large towns by their wealth or their political activity—that is, of great proprietors, great merchants, and demagogues. No man could hope for a seat unless he was possessed of a large property of a particular kind, or unless he had been fortunate enough to ingratiate himself with some large body of people. So that a perpetual bounty would be held out to every species of turbulence and intrigue. Every candidate, except the few whose wealth ensured them influence independently of exertion, must go through a species of political probation. Where the court party was strongest, he must shew himself capable of becoming an useful agent in procuring ministerial favours; where the democratical influence prevailed, he must give proofs of civism. So that the whole country would exhibit a perpetual struggle who should go furthest in subserviency to the court, or in democratical violence: not that I am by any means an enemy to popular elections. I am perfectly aware that they are indispensably necessary in order to keep alive a spirit of discussion and of independence, and to preserve the public mind from languor and stagnation. But then it appears to me that we have them quite in sufficient numbers to answer all these purposes most completely. And I must confess that there is no evil that I should more dread than that state of morbid agitation which would be produced in the political body by bringing all the active enterprizing talents of the country into constant and immediate contact with the most powerful, turbulent, and self-willed part of the population—by teaching every man that the first, and the last, and in fact the only material step towards political reputation and power, was popularity, and, consequently, by raising the art of flattering and bribing the people, above all other arts. Sir, I hope I may be pardoned for saying, that I do not see why the practice of this art ought to be made a necessary step in the education of every English statesman. No theory that I can form would lead me to such a conclusion; all experience, I am sure, is against it. If I look round this much-reviled assembly, which, in spite of all its defects, appears to me not inadequately to represent the wisdom and the property of the country, I see many persons, and those among its most conspicuous ornaments, who, after an early life spent in liberal studies, in learned professions, in the acquisition of all those branches of knowledge which most calculate a man for business and the conduct of great affairs, have, at last, acquired their seats in this house by those very means, hitherto so familiar to the practice of our constitution, but which we are now told it is our duty to prevent. I must own that I am at a loss to understand how this description of persons could have found admittance into a reformed House of Commons, still less can I persuade myself that they would have been more enlightened, more independent, or better fitted to guide the councils of their country wisely and magnanimously, if

their youth had been spent in the labours of a canvass, in the study of a poll-book, or in the care of cherishing some local interest, or in devising mountebank tricks and mischievous projects, like the orators of old in the petty republics of Greece, to delude and to ruin the people. From those gentlemen, sir, whom I mention with all that respect which is due to great talents usefully and honourably employed, we may, I think, fairly expect some aid in defending that constitution to which they are indebted for the opportunity of displaying their talent upon that great theatre on which they must naturally be most anxious to display them, and on which, for the sake of the country, it is most desirable that they should be displayed—talents which might otherwise have been buried in obscurity, or debased and perverted by those habits to which, under another form of government, it would be necessary to have recourse, in order to obtain a seat in the free, uninfluenced, democratical House of Commons. Sir, when I call to mind the names of all our most distinguished statesmen, when I place before my eyes the long and venerable order of those to whom England is most deeply indebted for her liberty and her fame, those whom we most reverence, those whom we most regret, and those whose like we most wish to see again, I cannot at the same time forget that they almost all owed the first opportunity of appearing in that assembly in which they were destined to rule by the force of their genius, to those very places, and to those very means, to which it seems no person in future is ever to owe a similar advantage, and that they made their first spring towards glory from that contaminated ground which we are to cut from under the feet of all succeeding generations.

"But then, sir, comes the selling of seats, which is always stated as the unanswerable part of the case; that grievance for which a remedy must be provided, that scandal for which no apology can be found. This is a subject upon which a great deal might be said; but having already troubled the house at such length upon other points, I shall content myself with a very few words upon this. In the first place, if, as I have endeavoured to shew, the existence of what are called close boroughs is almost essential to the very existence of our constitution, it is no argument against the whole system to say that it is liable to abuse, and that some evil is interwoven with the good. In the next place, there is no manner of reason to suppose, that the evil has extended very far; on the contrary, it is perfectly well known that the bought seats bear a very inconsiderable proportion, indeed, to the whole number; in the next, unless some actual evil can be shewn to have arisen from the practice, it is no more wrong that a certain number of seats should be sold than that commissions in the army, or situations in the old magistracy of France, should be disposed of in the same way; and, lastly, granting that the sale of a seat in parliament is a thing in its own nature utterly infamous and inconsistent with all the principles of free government, it remains to prove how you can prevent it, or, at least, how you can prevent something to the full as bad. You may, indeed, by disfranchising the small boroughs, prevent any person, or small number of persons, from acquiring a certain fixed interest which they may dispose of for money to any body they please, but still I insist that it is utterly out of your power to prevent practices quite as objectionable in point of principle, and far more extensively mischievous. The plain truth is, that nothing is more corrupt than popular election. It has any merit you please besides purity. One well-fought county gives occa-

sion to more bribery than half the boroughs in Cornwall put together. So that if purity is the object, more is lost than gained, since, for one act of corruption you substitute many, and extend the mischief further by involving more persons in the guilt. For in what, I beg to ask, does bribery consist? Does it consist merely in giving a man money, or in what is called treating him, in order to obtain his vote? No, it consists in a thousand things which cannot be prevented, nor so much as defined by law. It is impossible to draw an accurate line between friendship, benevolence, and good neighbourhood on the one hand, and corruption on the other. It is not bribery, for instance, to let a great estate in a county you wish to influence, very much below its value; it is not bribery to procure some mark of honour from the crown for some neighbouring gentleman who can command a good many votes; it is not bribery to obtain from the treasury all the patronage, as it is termed, of any particular place, that is, to distribute among your own supporters all the offices in the revenue and other departments that may happen to become vacant there. This is not bribery in the technical sense of the word, but do not these things exist? And is not their motive just as unquestionable as their existence? Does any man think that in point of morality there is any difference between them and the passing of money from hand to hand.? The distinction between them is altogether of a special kind—it might get off a culprit at the Old Bailey, but, in the discussion of a political question, it is utterly inadmissible. There is no doubt that a certain number of persons do owe their seats to the disinterested attachment, or the political enthusiasm of their constituents, but I am afraid that in matters of this sort, affection and enthusiasm are far less powerful principles than self-interest, and that so long as a seat in parliament continues to be a desirable object, the disposal of it, let it be vested in what hands it may, will be influenced by motives that are neither pure nor legal—unless, indeed, gentlemen think that they can eradicate men's feelings by act of parliament, and alter human nature itself by method of bill.

"But, sir, it may be said, that the objections I have urged apply to a more extensive change than that which has been proposed by my honourable friend; and that he speaks of moderate, and I of radical, reform. Sir, of all the visionary expectations to which this project has given birth, the most visionary is to suppose that reform is a thing of such a manageable nature, that it will stop at the precise boundary to which its authors may wish to confine it, that the waters will cease to flow at the bidding of those that have torn down the dykes. My honourable friend's plan indeed, to do him justice, is sufficiently moderate, and if it is not calculated to do much good, I must confess that, *per se*, it is not calculated to do much harm. In my view of the subject the main argument against this and all similar plans, is, that by adopting them we should admit the principle of altering what has been found practically good, upon mere theoretical grounds, which, whenever we do, a breach will be made in our constitution through which all that banditti will instantly rush, whom we are now, though with difficulty, able to repel. We are told, indeed, that it is necessary, not only on its own account, and for the sake of the benefits that are to flow from it, but in order to satisfy the people. This, however, is not so much a matter of argument, as a question of fact, and every person will be a good deal guided by the result of his own observation. As far, however, as my own knowledge and

experience have gone, I am inclined to think, that, with a view to this subject, the people of England may be divided into two classes; those that are content with the existing order of things, and those that are desirous of a far greater change than any that my honourable friend is prepared to call for I know it has been supposed that a large class of persons exists, desirous of what is termed 'moderate reform,' persons in the main well affected to our constitution, and whom it depends on ourselves, either wholly to conciliate and make our own, by yielding to their just and temperate demands, or to drive into an unnatural but formidable alliance with the Jacobins, by clinging blindly and pertinaciously to the most objectionable parts of our old system. Now, sir, I must own that of this moderate party so limited in their wishes, and consequently so easily to be contented, I am not able to see any very evident traces. That it exists I do not deny, but that it exists in any considerable number I utterly disbelieve. On the contrary, in all the most numerous meetings that have been held for the purpose of agitating this question, in all the speeches and publications that may be supposed in the most authentic manner to promulgate the will and pleasure of the reforming body, the idea of moderate reform has either not been mentioned at all, or mentioned only to be reprobated and disclaimed Their complaints and their demands are alike incompatible with any thing like what my honourable friend could call moderation. The grievances they state are such as never in the days of our forefathers were held to be grievances at all, and the remedies they propose are altogether subversive of the constitution as it existed in what are universally confessed to have been the best of times. The substance of their objection (as I have already had occasion to remark) consists in this, that what are called the representatives of the people are in fact returned by a very small minority of the people. Now, sir, I should beg to ask how this defect can be cured by any thing in the shape of moderate reform. To meet the wishes of these persons we must at once sweep away all our boroughs, we must burn all our charters, we must abolish all our franchises; and in place of this antiquated rubbish we must adopt a page or two of the American constitution. Short of this we shall do nothing to content them, the representation will still remain unadapted to the population, and their ground of complaint just as strong as ever Such a reform as that proposed by my honourable friend will be received not only with dissatisfaction, but with scorn, and I, or any person who is resolved to concede nothing, but to oppose every plan for a change in the representation, will stand better with the real reformers than the authors of what they will consider as a contemptible and illusory project. What then are we to do by acceding to this motion, and whom are we to oblige? We are to change the constitution of the country, under which it has enjoyed the greatest share of prosperity and glory ever enjoyed by men, in hopes of conciliating a class of persons who are either too feeble to make their voices heard amidst the more powerful cry for a radical reform, too little united among themselves to agree upon any common plan, or too lukewarm about their object to take the trouble of stating it in a separate form.

"There cannot, I am persuaded, be a more fatal error than to concede points of this sort in the hope of pleasing the multitude. The discontented, though numerous and powerful, more than in proportion to their numbers, from their zeal, their activity, and that proselytizing spirit which adds daily

to their force, are still a minority of the people of this country. But nothing is so likely to convert that minority into a majority, as feeble, graceless concessions on our part, concessions by which we shall forsake the vantage ground on which we stand, by which we shall surrender our best weapons of defence, by which we shall increase the strength of our enemies, without at all abating their rancour. Sir, in every age, and in every country, those who have been entrusted with the power of the state, have had to contend with something which for the moment has been the favourite project of vain, ambitious, or mistaken men. In our days they have thought fit to aim at a vital part, and the constitution of parliament is what we have to defend, and what it will require our utmost efforts to secure. Indeed, the very nature and condition of man almost forbid one to expect, that blessings so great as those we enjoy under the existing order of things, should, for long together, be held without interruption, and without struggle. For that struggle, I trust, we are prepared; since, if I am not much deceived, it will be long, perilous, and doubtful. But, at least, let us have no paltry ineffectual compromise. Let us make our stand upon our immemorial usages, upon the wisdom of our ancestors, and far more,—for there are persons to whom these things seem light,—upon the practical benefits we have derived from the present system in times of singular difficulty and danger. This is our only chance either for dignity or safety; but if we come at last with our miserable canting confession, implied or expressed, that we, heretofore falsely and fraudulently denominating ourselves the Commons of England, are not the Commons of England, and that we are too weak and too corrupt to manage the affairs that have been entrusted to us, and that therefore we will allow ourselves to be reformed a little, and suffer the government to be brought something nearer the pure and perfect model of democracy that ought to exist in this house; they will rejoice at the principle we shall admit, but they will require, and justly require, that we should follow it up with much larger concessions; they will laugh at our moderate reform, and treat us with scorn for believing, that, after having been so long kept out of their clear, and, by ourselves, acknowledged rights, they will at last be satisfied by the restoration of a small and insignificant part of them. They will proceed, as indeed, to do them justice, they have openly and manfully declared, in their own way, and upon their own principles—principles utterly incompatible with that order of things under which we have hitherto lived, and under which, I am not ashamed to say, I am still desirous to live. We may purchase a truce with these persons, but there can be no real peace, no substantial agreement between us. No concordat could be framed by which they can enter into our church, or we into theirs. Sooner or later the difference must break out, and the resistance must be made; and those which my honourable friend considers as timely concessions, and healing measures, are, in fact, only so many demonstrations of weakness and irresolution, which, though they may stagger the faith, and chill the zeal of the great body of the people who are still true to the constitution, will neither gain to us a single useful proselyte, nor retard our fate by a single hour.

"Sir, I beg pardon for having detained the house so long, but I was anxious not to lose this opportunity of expressing my settled aversion to this and all similar measures. If, for any thing that I have said, I am thought less true to the principles of free government, or less attached to

those with whom I have hitherto acted, it will be to me a matter of the most serious concern. I have always been, and still am, a sincere and zealous friend to civil and religious freedom, and I have therefore been anxious that the conduct of affairs should be entrusted to persons resting upon some more solid and constitutional basis of power than mere court favour, and that some check should be given to the influence of the crown, so increased with our increasing establishments, and with these objects in view I have been naturally led to concur, for the most part, with those that opposed the ministers of the crown. But if these objects, the attainment of which I do not despair of under the existing order of things, are to be pursued by means of a change in the constitution of the country, if we are to put every thing at stake in order to remedy a partial grievance, why then, sir, I can only say, that "*non hæc in fœdera veni*," I have made no such engagement, I will embark in no such design, I will subscribe to none of these new articles of faith, borrowed from the Gallican church, to be added to our ancient creed. The "Borough System," as it is invidiously called, existed very nearly in its present form in what are justly considered as the best times. Perhaps the nature of liberty may be a great deal better understood now than it was by our ancestors, and it may be idle to appeal to the authority of statesmen who flourished a hundred years ago. For my own part, however, I am not ambitious to live and die under a better constitution than that which was bequeathed to us by those great men that brought about the Revolution of 1688. These men were neither ignorant of the foundation upon which their rights rested, nor timid or lukewarm in asserting them; they were men capable of proceeding to the boldest deeds upon the most enlightened principles, and who had not hesitated, in defence of their civil and religious liberties, to hurl their sovereign from his throne, and begin a new era in the history of their country. And yet, sir, when the authors and supporters of that measure had accomplished their object, when Lord Halifax, and Lord Somers, and Lord Godolphin, and Lord Sunderland, the Cavendishes, and the Russells, when all the great families, and all the most illustrious individuals, who acted upon what were then called Whig principles, imagined, vainly (as it has been lately discovered,) and foolishly imagined, that they had reared a fabric under which they and their posterity might live to happiness and to glory, the people of England were just as imperfectly represented in parliament as they are now. In those days, as well as in these, the elective franchise was vested in decayed towns and in small corporations; and, as far as it can be ascertained as many persons owed their seats to individual influence as at the present moment, and yet no person appears so much as to have pretended that these anomalies were in their nature grievances, or that it was necessary to render the House of Commons a purely democratical assembly in order to preserve the liberties of the people. Be it right or be it wrong, this doctrine is not of ancient date, as some persons idly pretend, and without the least colour of authority from history or tradition, but is the mere offspring of the age in which we live. Whether or not it is to prevail, whether the present order of things draws to a close, or whether, notwithstanding some unfavourable appearances, the same good sense and good fortune, which have conducted the people of England to that pinnacle of prosperity on which they now stand, will be sufficient to

it appeared, that, in the course of the last ten years, viz. since the census of 1801, an increase of population, to the amount of more than one million and a half, had taken place. In England that increase appeared to be in a ratio of fourteen per centum, in Wales twelve, and in Scotland thirteen. This increase of population exhibited an extent and duration unexampled in the history of the country: and what was still more surprising, the increase of the males had been as great as that of the females. The total population of England, Scotland, and Wales, in 1801, was 10,472,048; it now amounted to 11,911,644, making an increase of 1,439,596 persons actually resident in the country; which, added to 170,000 serving in the army and navy abroad, made a total amount of 1,609,498. It is a singular proof of the energies of the country, that the population should have increased so fast, when the drain of men for the army, navy, and mercantile service is considered. It might be said, that at a period when the country exhibited such an increased population, employment for the lower orders had diminished; but in the manufacturing counties, and there only, had a temporary failure occurred. Every where else, the demand for labour kept pace with the increase of the population.—But taking the whole circumstances of the country into consideration, it was of great importance to the empire that the population exhibited this progressive increase. Some persons were of opinion, that the apparent increase in the present census arose, in some measure, from the imperfect execution of the former act; but the census of 1801, which was entrusted to the same persons who were employed on the present occasion, was very nearly correct. A subject of very grave importance stood connected with this increase of population—the facility of supplying the people with food. The high price of provisions at home, and the uncertainty of a supply of grain from other countries, called upon the legislature to devise means to enable the country to sustain its population independently of foreign aid.—The amount of the importations of grain was placed in a clear point of view by an account produced about the same time with the returns of the population. By that account it appeared, that during eleven years, from 1775 to 1786, the average quantity of grain imported annually was 564,413 quarters; from 1787 to 1798, 1,136,101 quarters; and from 1799 to 1810, including three years of scarcity, 1,471,003 quarters. The average prices were 30s. per quarter, in the first period, 40s. in the second, and 60s. in the third. During the last year not less than 4,271,000l. went out of the country for the sustenance of the inhabitants—a matter of most serious importance to the public interest. By another account, it appeared that the consumption of wheat and flour imported from foreign countries, had been progressively increasing from 1775 to the present time. In 1810, the quantity imported was 693,000 quarters, which clearly proved that the increase in the consumption of wheat was greater than that which had taken place in all the other kinds of grain; and that those who did not formerly consume wheat, now made it a principal part of their food.—To meet the growing wants of the population, without having recourse to foreign countries, formed one of the great objects of an enlightened legislation. The inclosure of commons and waste lands had been carried to a great extent; but had not kept pace with the necessities of the country. All the lands fit for the growth of barley, oats, &c. Mr Rose observed, should be continued under that species of tillage; and every en-

couragement should be given to the planting of potatoes, which would grow in soils unfit for the cultivation of grain. The fisheries constitute another important source of supply; although it is a singular circumstance that in a maritime country, such as this, fish is rarely to be seen, except at the tables of the rich, the poor receiving little or no benefit from so nutritious an aliment. There may be some prejudices against it; but the exertions of gentlemen in the different districts of the country, if rightly directed, might remove them. Mr Rose concluded, by remarking, that every encouragement was due to any plan which promised to introduce a variety of nutritious food amongst the lower orders, to save a sum of 3,500,000l. annually to the country, increase its agriculture, and, by extending its fisheries, employ 100,000 persons in that way, which, more than any other, tended to uphold the naval greatness of the empire.

In a committee of supply, Mr Wharton moved that a sum, not exceeding 554,441l. be granted for the expenses of the barrack department for the current year.—In the proposed grant, a sum of 138,000l. was included as the estimated expense of a new barrack to be built in the Regent's Park, for the second regiment of Life Guards; and various smaller sums for new buildings of the same kind to be erected at Liverpool, Bristol, and Brighton. Strong objections were made to some of these grants: in consequence of which, a debate of a very singular character arose, of which it would be impossible to offer an abridgement without doing injustice to all the speakers. Mr Whitbread seized the opportunity for attacking the government; and with the ebullitions of his patriotism, mixed some personal reflections on the character of the chief minister. The mildness and dignity of this eminent man formed a fine contrast to the violence of him who aspired to be his antagonist.—In answer to some objections which had been started by preceding speakers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "that there was a real necessity for erecting new barracks for the Life Guards. Government had been actually ejected from the possession of the present ones, and was obliged to make a new agreement with the lessor, paying an annual addition of 950l. for the convenience of remaining in them two or three years longer till others were built. The system of having the men diffused over the metropolis, away from their horses and accoutrements, he thought a very reprehensible one. What might have been the consequences, had such a system been in practice during the late disturbances? Might not the men have been intercepted by the mob from reaching their stables, and the peace of the capital have been most seriously endangered?—The honourable gentleman imagined, that it would be a work of bad taste, but he could assure him, that he was not conscious of any unnecessary expense. With respect to the barracks at Bristol, it would be hard to ascertain what sort of building it should be which was to last during the war, if that was a principle of limitation which the house would be inclined to adopt. If a barrack was to be built there, considering the extent and population of the town, considering also the accommodation it would afford to the military passing to and from Ireland, he thought it should not be built upon any parsimonious scale. The money that was thrown away under this denomination of expenditure, was chiefly applied to the purchase of temporary barracks, which were now in want of repair. As to Liverpool, it was considered to be a great inconvenience that there should be no bar-

rack there; and with regard to the expedient of hiring the warehouses for that purpose, he hardly thought that government would be justified in taking advantage, as it were, of the temporary suspension of trade in that place."

Mr Whitbread said, "that the right honourable gentleman appeared to him to have adopted erroneous views upon the subject, when he thought it of such little consequence to separate the soldiers from the people, as to be surprised at any objection to a grant for that purpose. The right honourable gentleman had not argued that general question; the time was gone by; but he would declare it as his sentiment, that he was extremely jealous, and he was sure the country at large was jealous, of the separating system. It had been said, that 'great advantage was likely to be derived from' the labours of the commissioners appointed to audit General Delancey's accounts. Perhaps at the end of four or five years, if the country should exist so long under such financiers, that advantage would greatly increase with the practices that rendered it necessary. But whence did the advantage arise? What was the necessity under which this boasted saving was made? The want of care in the controuling power; the negligence and mismanagement of those who, by proper application, ought to have prevented the occurrence of evils instead of leaving us to be obliged to the commissioners for the ascertainment of their extent. It was expected that if the commissioners proceeded, many other defalcations would appear. To him this was not consoling. An honourable gentleman had stated once, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the victim of the departments, and the public were given to understand that the honourable gentleman had left the treasury through disgust at the want of a sufficient controul.—But did the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer think that he wanted military controul over the people of this country? Even at the end of the war, which the right honourable gentleman seemed to think would last long, and which he was sure would last as long as the career of the right honourable gentleman, would it be necessary for us to look forward to the prospect of overawing them? Was this a principle to be maintained? Did any one ever hear a minister coolly assert it? But the right honourable gentleman disapproved of the idea of applying any of the warehouses of Liverpool to the purpose of accommodating the military. He who had made the loom useless, and the warehouse idle, who had spread starvation and discontent, had disapproved of that which to him appeared a natural course of proceeding—that of filling the warehouses with soldiers for the purpose of controuling the people under the inflictions he had brought on them and on the country.—But even although the right honourable gentleman had been endeavouring to make the revenue come up to an hundred millions, did he think, or could he think that for three years more the country could go on as it was now going? If things proceeded as they were now proceeding, if expenses continued to accumulate, and means to diminish, they must look for relief to a peace with the enemy, a peace which his measures had rendered unavoidable. In the transactions of past years he saw many great and glorious opportunities of ending this war neglected and lost, while, at present, the system of the right honourable gentleman was calculated to produce the necessity of peace by submission. But why was it necessary that the horse and the soldier should be more together now than at any other time? Did any reason exist now,

that did not exist before, why the soldier and the general population of the country should be kept apart, or why barracks, which he had always regarded, in conformity with the opinions of the most constitutional authorities, as fortresses for controuling the kingdom, should be multiplied and enlarged? As to the policy of it, merely with regard to the soldier, he understood that when the men were on service, those who came from regular barracks, were not so healthful as others, so that even military purposes were not likely to be served by it. One of the most lavish expenses under this head was incurred by the purchase of old houses at Clifton, in a ruined state, without a window; but now we were going back to Bristol again, to guard the French prisoners. Would to God that they were all out of this country, whether we continue at war or not!" The honourable gentleman concluded, with repeating his determination to vote against the resolution.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "that the honourable gentleman must be positive indeed upon the subject, and confirmed in the opinion he had formed, when he thought it right not only to censure the conduct of his majesty's government, but to vote against the resolutions before the committee."

Mr Whitbread, in explanation, stated, that his objection went only to the grant for building barracks.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer proceeded to observe, "that to refuse it without knowing whether the soldiers could be otherwise accommodated, might be productive of much inconvenience. He supposed, however, that by the debating strain which the honourable gentleman had thought proper to adopt, and the topics to which he had resorted, he expected to do much towards tranquillizing the country. When he brought forward his arguments attributing the starvation he described to the conduct of government, did he really think there was any thing in their manner of conducting the war against France which operated to produce the scarcity at Liverpool? Did he think there was any thing in it to call down the vengeance of Providence on our heads, and provoke him to deny the harvest to our hopes? If not, how could the honourable gentleman shut his eyes to what every man could see but himself, and resort to those imputations, which no man, who was acquainted with the subject, could hesitate to reject? He would own that in some inflammatory publications he had met with the topics to which the honourable gentleman had alluded; but he did not expect that any member could be found who would come down to that house for the purpose of making such statements. The honourable gentleman had spoken of golden opportunities of making peace, which ministers had neglected; but he did not say, he could not say, whether one of those opportunities presented itself now; and if no such opportunity existed, where was the policy in asserting, that there was no salvation for the country but in peace? It would be impossible for him to say so much against the peace he recommended, as by saying that we were unable to go on with the war. The honourable gentleman had always said that he would not accept of peace but upon honourable terms. If, then, peace could not be obtained upon honourable terms, there was, according to the honourable gentleman's own feelings, and those of the country, but one alternative. Why then should the honourable gentleman give the sanction of his authority to the opinion, that the war could not be conducted, and that we were only to look for consolation to the event of the enemy

granting us peace? Nothing could be more improper, nothing more unjust, nothing more dangerous to the security of the country, or more calculated to inflame the minds of the people under the present high price of provisions, than flinging out opinions of this sort to the disadvantage of the great contest in which we were engaged. He would maintain, and he thought the honourable gentleman might have been included amongst the number of those who would insist upon the same doctrine, that if we could not obtain peace upon honourable terms, we must maintain the war at all hazards, and under all circumstances, and to the last extremity. As to what had been said of his intention to keep the people down by a military force, when he had driven them to madness by his policy, he would ask where was the proof? In that candour of mind, in which he hoped the honourable gentleman was not deficient, he might have acknowledged, for he must have known, that it was at least a matter of serious doubt, whether all the difficulties experienced in our trade, would not have been aggravated, if they were not met by the orders in council. In two years after the adoption of those orders, this fact was demonstrated by an increase of our trade. Yet the honourable gentleman went on with his old proof, or rather with his old statement, in defiance of this striking fact, and insisted that our sufferings were not owing to the decrees of the enemy, but to our own orders in council. If this was logic, he was sure it was not a logic which the honourable gentleman would apply to any other subject; this confusion of cause and effect, this anticipation of consequence over the means that produced it, could, in no other than a political case, have warped the mind of the honourable gentleman. But if he was right in supposing that the effects which preceded the decrees were not to be ascribed to them, how was it fair to represent them as the act of our own government? Was this his wisdom, was this his policy, was this his patriotism? The reasoning of the honourable gentleman would go to turn all the resentment not against the enemy, but against the government; and that too, at a time when we were engaged in war with an enemy, who if the honourable gentleman was not aware intended our destruction, he must be ignorant of what was known to every body else. From this country he had met with his most effectual check in the pursuit of his insatiable ambition, and in his progress to universal empire and universal tyranny, his certain disappointment. If the honourable gentleman did not see this, and he trusted in God that he did not, when he called upon the country not to look to Buonaparte and to France, but to its own government, with indignation, and ascribed the inflictions of Providence to them alone; if he did not see this, but could make such statements with a conviction that he was doing right, he was sure that such sentiments would meet with little sympathy and little support."—(Loud and continued cheers.)

Mr Whitbread rose, evidently in great agitation, and began by declaring, "that if he were not in that house, he would ask the warmest friend, or the loudest cheerer of the right hon. gentleman, whether the whole of his speech was not a gross misrepresentation? The right hon. gentleman was mistaken if he supposed that he had obtained a victory over him. No; it was a victory over his own invention. The house of commons was a fine place—the constitution of England was a great thing—every thing was to be admired, respected, and supported, when an adventurer from the bar was raised by his talent for debate to a

great situation, but a great situation which nobody but himself would have accepted under such circumstances."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer here signified his dissent from the statement that nobody would have accepted the situation but himself.

Mr Whitbread repeated the statement, maintained the truth of it, and added, "If you doubt me, I refer you for information to a letter signed Spencer Perceval." (Loud cries of, order, from all parts of the house, followed this expression, and Mr Whitbread attempted for some time in vain to be heard.)

Mr Yorke rose to order. The hon. gentleman had just made one of the most outrageous personal attacks on his right hon. friend which had ever been heard in that house. With respect to the justice or propriety of the attack thus made, he ——

Mr Ponsonby rose to order—(Here the disorder became general, and cries of Chair! Chair! resounded through the house; at length Mr Ponsonby obtained a hearing)—"I call the right hon. gentleman himself to order, and on this ground, that he having risen to call my hon. friend to order, did not confine himself to that point, but thought proper to advert to other topics, thereby transgressing the regulations of the house. I speak this before high authority, who will contradict me if I should be incorrect."

Mr Lushington, the chairman, then declared his opinion to be, that Mr Whitbread had been out of order.

Mr Whitbread got up again, and "confessed he had risen in some heat, and unconsciously at the time had exceeded the limits of debate. He would however say, that if he was described as having told the people that they were to regard the government rather than Buonaparte as their enemy, it was a gross misrepresentation. Unfortunately it was too much a practice to identify the government with the ministry, and convert the fair claims of the former to support and attachment, into a blind approbation of the measures of the latter. Whatever might be the construction put upon his words, he was determined ever to speak out in the house of commons, to conceal no part of the truth, and to lend no helping hand to the delusion, any more than to the ruin of the people. He knew nothing more likely to prove destructive to the safety and greatness of the people than the prevalence of a different doctrine. He did not confound the visitations of Providence with the decrees of France, or the measures of the right hon. gentleman. But he knew that thousands of manufacturers were now out of employment, and that tens of thousands were now working at reduced wages, which scarcely sufficed to procure them subsistence. He knew that an unreformed house of commons had approved of all the proceedings of the right honourable gentleman, and of all his orders in council, but he knew too, that the people and the merchants out of the house, were, in every part of the kingdom, of very different opinions. Was not this table already covered with petitions that daily multiplied; and had he indeed abandoned all his patriotism when he stated this? As to what he had said with respect to peace, how was it possible for him to speak positively as to the fitness of the present moment; but how could any time be found appropriate unless the experiment were made? Would the right hon. gentleman, looking back to that history in which he was so well read, pronounce it to be his opinion that we were hereafter likely to obtain such desirable conditions of peace as might have been obtained at any former periods? The right hon. gentleman boasted of our being the great and only barrier to Buonaparte's desire of universal domi-

nion. On this point there could be no dispute; why were we so? Because it was the policy of the authors of this and the preceding war which had made us so; which had first made Buonaparte consul for life, and afterwards, in alliance with his own talents, had made him emperor, and had enabled him to trample upon every hostile state. The same errors and fallacies were still circulating and still believed; one day Prussia was said to be arming against France, on another she was described as uniting her force to that of France, to assist in crushing the only independent state remaining on the continent. It was his duty, then, to ask the people to be misled no longer by the fatal policy of ministers; and he would ask the right hon. gentleman himself, not to become the victim of his own infatuation, by bringing the country to the end of its resources. He believed the period must soon arrive when this would be the case. He should be sorry if any thing had fallen from him that might bear an interpretation foreign to his intentions, but he had deemed it an impressive duty to enter into this avowal of his sentiments."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared, "that every offensive impression which the hon. gentleman had made, more on the feelings of his hon. friends than on his own, was completely removed. He had certainly not attributed to the hon. gentleman that which he imagined him to have done. As to the question immediately before the house, he held it to be desirable that in populous towns the soldiery ought rather to be kept apart than to be quartered on the people. The hon. gentleman had again alluded to the orders in council; but could they be said to prevent the importation of corn, when it was generally known that, notwithstanding their operation, eight millions had been paid last year for foreign corn imported? The fact was, that the scarcity was felt as severely in France at present as in England."

Mr Stephen "confessed that he did not hear the first speech of the hon. gentleman, but had the misfortune to hear the two last. He should certainly think himself greatly wanting in his duty to the public, if he did not endeavour to counteract, by every effort in his power, the mischievous misrepresentations of the measures of government which were circulated insidiously through the country. Those misrepresentations were calculated to divert the resources of the country from that patriotic channel in which they ought to flow, into a channel of disaffection; they were calculated to make men turn away their confidence from the conductors of our public affairs, and to make them believe that until certain measures were adopted, until a change, which he knew to be impossible, should take place, the country could never regain its former prosperity. It was the proper and peculiar duty of a member of parliament not to suffer the public to be deluded by artful misrepresentations,—not to suffer their ignorance or their prejudices to be worked upon by those persons in the country who seemed to spend their time and talents in poisoning the minds of the people. He could conceive nothing more mischievous in a political, nor more infamous in a moral sense, than the propagation of the falsehood which was now disseminated; of falsehood he should say, because there were many members on the benches opposite, and even the honourable gentleman himself, (Mr Whitbread) who had admitted at various times that the effect of the orders in council was not such as was now attributed to them. He held in his hand a paper which was just one of that description which now crowded the newspapers, and in hand-bills crept through the country; this paper was

signed, "A Staffordshire Potter," and it set out with a most notorious falsehood, that before the orders in council, and under the first operation of Buonaparte's decrees, our trade was not diminished. (Hear, hear, from Mr Baring.) What? did he hear a cheer from any gentleman opposite? or was the cheer from him who had often taken part in debates on this subject, and who must, therefore, be well acquainted with the truth of the fact which he was alluding to? Did the honourable gentleman mean that the representation of the paper was right? If so, he should certainly move a resolution on the fact, and have it officially before the house. (Move, move! from the opposition benches.) He disdained those sneering cries, because he knew that there was no person who would venture to call upon him seriously for proof of a fact which was in evidence before the house. It was already known, that during the first three months after the issuing of Buonaparte's decrees, until the orders in council were adopted, our trade had not only diminished, but was entirely at a stand; that there were no exports, and that many of the cargoes which had cleared the river for the continent were obliged to be relanded. The insurance was even so high as 60 per cent.; so that scarcely any underwriter was to be found who would subscribe one. This was a stubborn fact, and yet, in defiance of such a truth, there were men who could be base enough to mislead poor ignorant manufacturers, and make them attribute to the orders in council, and the government who advised them, all the evils of their present condition. Such a bold and rank imposture he would not impute to any member of that house, because he was aware that the intentions of them all were pure; but he would say, that such an imposture must proceed from a French party, animated by French spirit, imbued with French principles, entertaining French views, discontented with their own government, and willing to rush upon measures that must be fatal to all that Englishmen hold dear, to the freedom that Englishmen cherish, and the independence, without which they would not care to exist. Such an imposture as this, in such a country, and under such a government, was unparalleled in the baseness and profligacy of mankind. In justice to the poor deluded manufacturers, he wished to see these detestable arts abandoned; and this effort of his indignation was directed to no other purpose. He begged the lurking authors of those misrepresentations to look to the consequences; to see that they were only paving the way for the ravages of military force, and exposing the nation to a deluging waste of blood.—The honourable and learned gentleman then proceeded to shew, that in the six months subsequent to the issuing of the orders in council, the country had reached a pitch of prosperity unknown at any former period of our history,—that our exports were unexampled, amounting to no less an excess than ten millions. After this statement, he would put it to the candour of the honourable gentleman, whether he was fair in the introduction into his speeches of those little episodes on the orders in council; whether his custom of flinging a remark or two on this subject into the context of his casual speeches, was altogether very gracious, when he always declined making any specific motion,—any motion that could be distinctly met by the evidence of facts which were too strong to be broken down. The honourable gentleman was always carping at the orders in council, save the first two years, when he thought it convenient to be silent on their effects; and now again he came forward with his views,

and prospects, and prophecies; and it appeared that in his opinion there was no alternative for England but inability to carry on the war, or submission. Really, although he was not himself totally devoid of apprehension, he confessed that he derived some consolation from the honourable gentleman's evil predictions. In fact, the honourable gentleman's prophecy was to him the very best security he could wish for. The reputation of a prophet seemed to be the fame now most in vogue; and if the ambition of the honourable gentleman was very soaring, he would recommend him to become editor of Moore's Almanack, in which work he could have a wide field for the display of his abilities. The prediction of sun-shine in the dog-days, or a fall of snow in December, might fortuitously and felicitously turn out to be realised, and the character of the honourable gentleman might be retrieved. The honourable and learned gentleman then argued, that the present scarcity was not to be attributed to the orders in council, contrary to what he understood had been stated by the honourable gentleman. (Here Mr Whitbread signified his dissent.) He was glad to see that the honourable gentleman disavowed, by his gesture, that he had imputed the scarcity to the government,—that was at least one advantage gained by this irregular discussion. As to the asperity of the beginning of the debate, after the display of good humour by the honourable gentleman, he should not repeat the offensive expressions which were applied to his right honourable friend. At the same time, he could not help saying, that when his right honourable friend was represented by the honourable gentleman as rising to his station by talent, and ingenuity, and dexterity, and afterwards said to have obtained his place because no one else would take it, there was some little appearance of discrepancy in the honourable gentleman's assertions. At one time it was his dexterity, and the next moment it was the refusal of others to take his situation, that kept him in it. His right honourable friend's dexterity must certainly be very formidable, when there was no person on the other side who would venture to change places with him. But if it was not even choice, but necessity, to which his right honourable friend owed his situation, he must say, that it was a most fortunate necessity for the country. If the withholding of their services on the part of others was the means of preserving his right honourable friend to his country, then that refusal was a most important event in the history of England, and would be equally an important event to his character. It would shew that his fame, which was progressively increasing, and would increase to ages, arose not from any ardent and sanguine love of power—that its spring was not in ambition, but that it was driven to display itself by the disinclination of others to strengthen the administration, to share in the toils and perils of his situation. It was pleasing to him to say, that he knew no minister who had better graced his pre-eminence; and under his auspices he was confident that this country would not be reduced to the disgraceful alternative mentioned by the honourable gentleman opposite."—Such was the violence on the one side, and such the dignity displayed on the other, in the course of this famous conversation, which did much to exalt the character of Mr Perceval.—The historian of these times may well dispense with any reflections on an occurrence upon which the parties themselves have so effectually stamped their characters and pretensions.

About thirty years ago, the commissioners of public accounts report-

ed their opinion that the office of paymaster of widows' pensions was a mere sinecure, that it was useless, and that it ought to be abolished.* In a late report of the commissioners of military enquiry, these gentlemen referred to the former report of the commissioners of public accounts, confirmed their opinion, and recommended that on the death of the patentee, Gen. Fox, the office should be abolished. General Fox died in the interval betwixt the last and present sessions of parliament, but as the office had not been actually abolished, and as it was uncertain whether the legislature might concur in opinion with the commissioners, it was thought expedient, in the mean time, to fill up the appointment. Colonel M'Mahon, an old and faithful servant of the Prince Regent, a gentleman in whose praise the different parties in the house of commons vied with each other, was appointed to the office; but so anxious were ministers to avoid suspicion, that care had been taken distinctly to communicate to Colonel M'Mahon, that, considering the circumstances of his appointment, he was to hold the office subject to any view which parliament might afterwards take of it. The ministers had some reason to believe that they had thus secured the government against all misrepresentation; but in this they were greatly mistaken. The enemies of the appointment fully subscribed to all that had been said in praise of Colonel M'Mahon, but were not the more satisfied with the manner in which the official situation to which he had been appointed, had been bestowed. Far from thinking that the high character of the individual justified the appointment, they were of opinion, that the more deserving the man, the more strictly ought his appointment to be scrutinised. When a job was to be done, said they, if a person generally obnoxious were selected, there was less reason to fear that men would forget their duty, and be cheated into silence, than when a man deservedly high in public estimation was appointed to a sinecure. The appointment, they said, was insulting to parliament. It flew directly in the face of their resolutions. The abolition of the office of paymaster of widows' pensions had been recommended not merely by the commissioners of 1783, but that recommendation had been confirmed by the commissioners of military enquiry in 1808, in the strongest manner.—The house itself, in 1810, after no very mild debate, had given its sanction to that recommendation. In that year, after a warm discussion on the 31st of May, and the 1st of June, and after one division, the house came to two resolutions. The first was of a very general nature, as it merely resolved, "That the utmost attention to economy is at all times the duty of parliament." The second stated, "That it was the opinion of that committee, that, in addition to the useful and effective measures already adopted for the abolition of sinecure offices, it was expedient to extend them to others, the duties of which were performed by deputy;" and a farther amended resolution, after a long debate, declared, "That for this purpose, in addition to the useful and effective measures already adopted for the abolition of sinecures, and of offices the duties of which were executed by deputy, it was expedient to enable his majesty to reward in a different way those who had filled high effective civil offices."—That the office held by Colonel M'Mahon in the prince's household was a high one, but it did not bring him within the meaning of the last resolution, which was only understood to comprehend those who held high effective situations in the courts of justice, in the army and navy, and in the public offices of state.—It appeared a mere jest to talk of the situa-

tion held by Colonel M'Mahon as coming within the meaning of the resolution.--The resolution recommended the abolition of all offices which produced revenue without employment, and the regulation of those where the revenue and employment were disproportionate. The reports both of the commissioners of 1783, and of 1808, recommended the abolition of the two offices of paymaster and deputy paymaster of widows' pensions, as being unnecessary, the one having very little to do, the other nothing at all. The office of paymaster had in particular been recommended to be done away on the demise of General Fox. Now, what had been done by ministers when that event took place? Why, at a time when the house was not sitting, and parliament had no opportunity of addressing the Prince Regent on the subject, they had advised that the office should be given to Colonel M'Mahon! But then, said the ministers, it was distinctly communicated to him that he was to hold it subject to any future act of parliament. What was there in this? Why, Colonel M'Mahon held his own private estate subject to any future act of parliament. That he must so hold his sinecure was known to him before, and his having been told so then, only proved that the ministers were conscious they were disregarding those principles which had been recognised by the house and its commissioners. It had been said that it was not granted to General Fox for life any more than to Colonel M'Mahon; but on turning to the report of 1783, it would be seen that no reason had been given for not immediately abolishing the office, but that it was then held by General Fox. If, then, they had acted consistently with that recommendation, on his death it would have been abolished. That the grant of it to Colonel M'Mahon did not prevent its being subject to a future act of parliament, was certain, but it threw an obstacle in the way of its abolition, and on this ground they could not but object to the appointment.

The speakers on the other side replied to some arguments against appointing members of parliament to official situations, as well as to the objections made to the appointment more immediately under the consideration of the house. On the several questions they took high ground. It is obvious, said they, that where a member has been appointed to an office which renders him incapable of sitting in parliament, he cannot belong to the class of persons by whom the determinations of the house of commons are said to be improperly influenced. By accepting office under government, he vacates his seat, and his constituents must determine whether he shall again fill it. If they disapprove of him as their representative, the remedy is in their own hands. But does any one really think that the circumstance of being a member of the house of commons should disqualify any gentleman from serving the public in an official capacity? Who will pretend that a barrister, for instance, who has discovered extraordinary talents, should be excluded from holding a public office, because he is a member of parliament? Yet to such absurdities did the arguments on the other side lead,—for it had been admitted that to all the appointments complained of, men of talent and integrity had been selected. No want of honour or of capacity to fill the situations to which they had been appointed had been charged against any of them; and if the appointments were objectionable, they must be so on this foundation,—that the gentlemen on whom they had been conferred, had been thought worthy of a seat in that house by their constituents. The objection had the merit of novelty to be sure, but could

boast of nothing else to recommend it.—Colonel M'Mahon had been highly praised, although no more than justice had been done to his character; yet to propose him to the Prince Regent as a person well entitled to a public reward, had been characterised as disgraceful to the individual, derogatory to the prince, and insulting to parliament.—It was known that the abolition of the office had been recommended by a committee of the house of commons, and *it was supposed* that the office had been given to Colonel M'Mahon by patent for life. But before gentlemen came forward with such a statement, they ought to have given themselves the trouble of enquiring into the tenure of the office, and the terms of the appointment. Had they done this, they would have found that the office of paymaster of widows' pensions had never been granted for life, and was not held by such a tenure even by the late General Fox. But Colonel M'Mahon did not hold the office on the same terms with Gen. Fox; the appointment had not been such as to throw discredit on the Prince Regent, to insult parliament, or even to contemn the resolutions of a committee of the house of commons. In bestowing it, a marked respect for the resolutions of the committee had been shewn; and so far were the Prince Regent and his ministers from throwing obstacles in the way of such economical measures as the house might approve, that it had been distinctly communicated to Colonel M'Mahon by his royal highness's command, that he was to hold the office subject to any view which parliament might take of it; that he was to consider his appointment as liable to the future adjudication of the legislature.—With respect to this and other sinecures, the house would recollect the course of its own proceedings. It had been resolved that no sinecures ought to be abolished till some other provision was made for rewarding the servants of the public. The case of Colonel M'Mahon was that of a person whose services merited public remuneration; the power of giving pensions instead of sinecures had not yet been granted to the sovereign, and under those circumstances the office in question having become vacant, it had been given to as worthy an individual as the government could have selected.

In consequence of this discussion, Colonel M'Mahon's appointment was recalled; nor was this the only occasion during the present session on which this gentleman had to share with his royal master in the obloquy which it had now become fashionable to cast upon the actions of the Prince Regent.—The great increase of public business had suggested to the prince the convenience of having a private secretary, and Col. M'Mahon, as the person best qualified to fill this situation, was accordingly named to it. Mr Wynn, however, immediately brought forward a motion on the subject, which he and his friends affected to consider as of the deepest interest to the welfare of the monarchy, and the safety of the state. The reasons assigned by them for the great alarm which they felt on this occasion were various. 'The office was a new one; there was no precedent for it in the history of the country.' In such circumstances, when an appointment so novel and extraordinary had been made, it was the business of the House of Commons to enquire into the character and functions which it might confer, and, by resisting dangerous innovation and gross abuse, to watch over the public safety. But notwithstanding the novelty of this appointment, the uncertainty of the public as to the exact nature and duties of the office, and the imperious call for enquiry by the House of Commons, the representatives of the peo-

ple knew nothing more about it than what they learned from the Gazette, viz.—"That Colonel M'Mahon had been appointed private secretary to his royal highness the Prince Regent."—No regular appointment had taken place,—nothing appeared but a minute of treasury for the payment of salary. But what in reality was this office—what the nature of the holder's situation—was he to be a cabinet minister, or must he be considered as a mere clerk or amanuensis?—Did the circumstances of the present times justify the appointment? William the Third was the soul—the prime mover of the confederacy formed in his reign for the preservation of the liberties of Europe: He sate in his own cabinet; exercised a vigilant scrutiny over every department of the state; looked into every thing with his own eyes; yet King William had no private secretary. When the house of Brunswick was called to the throne,—when George the First came to this country, a stranger to our language and manners, if at any time the appointment of such a secretary could have been reasonable, surely it was at that time; yet George the First had no private secretary. But it was unnecessary to go farther back than the reign of his present majesty; every one knew with what zeal he attended to public business till the period of his unfortunate illness. He bestowed more attention on business than any of his predecessors; no appointment, how trifling soever, was made without taking his pleasure upon it. From the close of the American war, to the commencement of the present, he had ruled not only as a king, but in some instances as commander-in-chief, his pleasure having been always taken by the secretary at war upon commissions granted in the army; yet his majesty never had a private secretary till his unfortunate complaint led to the appointment of Colonel Taylor.—At last, came this appointment, and it was for the House to consider whether it formed any precedent for the appointment of Colonel M'Mahon. The appointment of Colonel Taylor did not take place till the disease in his majesty's eyes had become so severe, that he was unable to read the communications of his ministers, and assistance of some kind became indispensable. But it never was supposed that this appointment would be made a precedent for others of the same kind under circumstances altogether different. If such a suspicion had been even hinted, the appointment of Colonel Taylor would have been more particularly noticed; but on all occasions where the circumstance had been alluded to in the house, a feeling of delicacy seemed to prevail which for a time suppressed all enquiry and discussion.—King William had no secretary! King George the First had no secretary! And why? Because the secretary of state for the home department is the king's private secretary, and it is his business to wait on his majesty and take his pleasure on the affairs of his office. Such had been the practice in former times; such had been the practice even in the reign of his present majesty, until the period of his malady; and even then it might have been better if the secretary of state had daily attended his majesty, and communicated with him without the intervention of another person. Perhaps the same plan might have been followed had not his majesty taken a dislike to his London residence, and determined to reside at Windsor, when the office to which Colonel Taylor had been appointed, of course became necessary. But where was the necessity for the creation of this new office at the present moment, with a salary of 2000l. a-year? It had been said that there was a great accumulation of business. Had it really accumula-

ted so much within these few years as to require the creation of a new office when no disability of the Prince Regent to execute his high duties had been insinuated? "Look at the number of commissions in the army," it was said; "consider what a labour it is even to sign them." It might be so; but surely it was not intended that the private secretary should subscribe the Regent's name to these commissions. If the labour were really too burthensome, it might be lightened by an expedient which had at a former period been adopted. The sovereign might execute a warrant empowering the commander-in-chief to sign as many commissions as were to appear in the Gazette on one occasion.—Was it proper to have a private secretary to read to his royal highness the communications of his ministers? His royal highness resided in London, the ministers had an opportunity of daily consultation with him, and there could be no occasion for a private secretary to communicate the result of their deliberations and advice. It was a matter of no slight importance to determine whether the communications of the cabinet council to the sovereign should be allowed to pass through any third person whatever. If such a thing were intended, it became the more necessary for the House to examine into the objects of the appointment, and the consequences to which it was likely to lead. It was highly unconstitutional to allow the secrets of the council to pass through a third person, and that person, perhaps, not a councillor. It might be said that Colonel M'Mahon was a privy councillor, but this circumstance did not strengthen the argument on the other side. By his oath as secretary, supposing him a mere clerk, he would be bound faithfully to read the communications to his royal highness, and faithfully to write whatever the Prince Regent should command; but in his character of privy councillor he was bound by his oath to give his advice upon what he read. Was it fitting that the cabinet ministers should have their advice to the sovereign exposed to the animadversions of his private secretary? If, indeed, interior and exterior cabinets were parts of our constitution, there might be some reason for having a secretary to carry the communications from one to the other. If it were constitutional for the sovereign to have both an ostensible ministry and a private junto to carry on the government, such a secretary might be necessary to conduct the correspondence between these two bodies. If it were expedient that the high offices of the household should be hawked about by the menial servants and attendants of the sovereign, as might happen on some occasions, then the use of such an officer as this might be apparent; though even then there ought to be a formal appointment, that the officer might be responsible.—This was an important view of the subject, and deserved the most serious attention.

If the time which the advisers of the crown had chosen for recommending this improper measure were considered, their offence would appear under heavy aggravations. Public opinion proclaimed, that at this period least of all should any addition be made to the vast expenditure of the country.—Col. M'Mahon, in the first instance, was named to an office, the abolition of which a committee of the House had strongly recommended; and when parliament decided that he should not retain it, the ingenuity of government had been directed to discover a new office still more objectionable. What could be said of such a measure, but that a determination was evinced to create a place with the view of compensating Colonel M'Mahon for that of which he had been deprived, in obedience to

the determination of parliament? It was needless to say any thing of the services of Colonel M'Mahon; no one doubted the propriety of rewarding them; but were the places in the household of the Regent seized upon with such rapacity that nothing could be reserved for a faithful servant? Would not the privy purse suffice; or if the salary were inadequate, could not the place of equerry be subjoined? If both together were insufficient, surely other situations might have been discovered to fill up the measure of reward.—But the Prince Regent, with all the vigour of youth, and without the infirmities of his father, could require no such assistance as ministers seemed anxious to provide for him.

In support of the appointment, it was said, that the renowned champions of constitutional principles, the great advocates of popular rights,—were eager to declare—what?—that the king should not have a private secretary—that the head of the executive government should not be relieved from that bodily labour from which any other person in the kingdom, having only half as much to do, would certainly claim an exemption. Such was the object to be accomplished by all this show of argument and noise of declamation. To accomplish their purpose, they had moved for the instrument by which Colonel M'Mahon had been appointed private secretary to the Prince Regent. What occasion could there be for producing papers which could give the House no information? If the instrument specified the precise duties which Colonel M'Mahon had to perform, there might be some ground for its production; but it contained no such specification, as it merely announced that Colonel M'Mahon had been appointed private secretary to the Prince Regent. They who had ulterior views—they who thought the instrument illegal, would of course vote for the production of the papers; but others, who had different views, would take an opposite course. The present was the proper moment to settle both the legality and expediency of the appointment; for even when it had been proved that the appointment was not illegal, its merits might still remain questionable.

It was difficult to conceive how any person could regard the act as illegal.—Was it contended that the crown had no power to create a new office?—Those who entertained this opinion might be referred to the statute-book for proofs that such a power was constitutionally vested in the chief magistrate of this country. The statute of Queen Anne expressly recognized new offices created by the crown, although it disqualified the holders from sitting in parliament.—But Colonel M'Mahon was not a new officer in the strict sense of the word. The situation which Colonel Taylor held about his majesty was the same with that held by Colonel M'Mahon about the prince; and both or none of the appointments was legal; yet when Colonel Taylor was named secretary to the king, no objection was made. Every party in its turn had availed itself of the instrumentality of Colonel Taylor, without discovering that his office was illegal or unconstitutional.—The private secretary of the Regent, it had been said, was the organ of his pleasure to all his subjects. This was fine language; but in what respect could he be called the organ of the Prince Regent's pleasure? When we speak of the king's pleasure, we understand the words to signify his approbation or disapprobation of any act of state; but in that sense of the words Colonel M'Mahon could not communicate the pleasure of the Prince Regent in any way that could authorise the subject to obey it, or to act upon it with official responsibility. The private se-

cretary did not hold any office of state, but had been appointed for the sole purpose of relieving the incredible bodily labour to which the increased and increasing business of the country exposed the head of the executive government. The papers sent from the different public offices,—the numberless acts which it was necessary to submit to the Prince Regent for his approbation or for his signature, some of them very urgent, and consequently to be presented as such,—some less so, and hence to be disposed of in another manner,—the manual labour attendant upon the discharge of such duties, required that some plan should be adopted for relieving the severity of exertion. Even the arrangement of the mass of communications submitted to the royal attention, was in itself a source of labour which required the employment of a secretary, by whose intervention the dispatch of public business might be greatly facilitated.--His majesty, it had been said, discharged all that labour for forty-five years without any such relief, nor did he ask assistance till he was driven to it by an infirmity, from which the Prince Regent was happily exempted. His majesty certainly did transact the public business without the assistance of a private secretary, and he did so to the astonishment of every one; but while we did honour to the laborious activity and diligence of George III, we should remember some discriminating circumstances between him and the exalted personage who now exercised the sovereign authority. The king came to the throne at a very early period of his life, and was gradually trained to those habits of business which accommodated themselves to the gradual increase of labour which every year of his reign produced. In him it progressively became a task of comparative ease; but the Prince Regent entering upon the laborious details of government at a much more advanced stage of life, could not be expected to possess those facilities in transacting public business, or that severe application to it, which was the result of early habit in his royal father; and must be overwhelmed at once by the mass of business which comes before him, were it not for the assistance of a secretary in the minor details of arrangement.—Looking, therefore, at this part of the question alone, without adverting to the great increase of duties annexed to the office of the sovereign, arising out of the present state of the country, the motion was the most extraordinary one that had ever been brought before that House. It seemed to betray deep marks of a disposition to complain in the absence of all grounds of complaint—of a determination to find grievances where none existed; but at the same time it displayed a miserable poverty of invention.—Great pomp and solemnity had accompanied its whole progress down to the present moment. A month or six weeks before, notice was given by the honourable member of a motion upon a most important constitutional question. Expectation was excited—the day arrived, and lo! they were to decide whether the Prince Regent was to have a private secretary! Really it was a subject scarcely deserving of the solemnity which had been attached to it; it was brought forward rather from party views—rather for the purposes of misrepresentation than any other. It was intended to persuade the country that Colonel M'Mahon would be the organ of communication between that cabinet behind the throne, of which so much had been said, and the official servants of the crown. He was to be represented as the channel through which would flow that stream of secret influence, of unseen power, by which the subordinate agents of government were supposed to be direct-

ed. But did any body believe all this? Such common-place declamation might serve very well to turn a paragraph in a newspaper, in order to keep alive an impression unfavourable to government, but was hardly worthy of serious refutation; it was very well, to be sure, that it should be used by those who thought the Prince Regent's pleasure could not be properly communicated, because they were not the objects of it. The subject of the present motion was not of that grave nature which had been supposed; and the appointment of Colonel M'Mahon as private secretary, was neither unlawful nor inexpedient, unless the House were prepared to make the Prince Regent one of the greatest slaves in his own dominions.

The motion was lost by a considerable majority; and never surely was there a more sordid attempt at economy, or a more singular effort to excite jealousy and alarm. In justice to the reader, a general view has been preserved of this memorable debate; it might be convenient for some persons that their sentiments on this, as on other occasions, should be buried in oblivion, but it is for the advantage of the country that such things should be remembered To what does the question really amount which called forth this marvellous display of constitutional knowledge?—Was the appointment of a private secretary to the prince illegal? No; since the crown has an unquestionable power to create new offices—Was it unconstitutional? No; for the private secretary had nothing to do with affairs of state—he had no advice to give—he had no responsibility—he had no influence or power. Was it worth while, in point of economy, to dispute about an allowance of 2000l. a-year to a person who should relieve the sovereign of this great empire, of labours which he could with the utmost difficulty overtake, and many parts of which it was quite unsuitable to his dignity to perform?—Upon constitutional principles, surely, this appointment could not be assailed, while the spirit of economy which could seek its recal, was altogether unworthy of a great nation.

The tellership of the exchequer, an office of great antiquity, had been conferred on the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Camden, as a reward for the services of their respective fathers, the one of whom, Mr George Grenville, had been prime minister, and the other (Lord Camden) one of the greatest lawyers of this country. The office is as ancient as the exchequer itself, and, like many other offices, bestowed by the crown, confers upon the holder a vested right with which the legislature cannot, under any circumstances, interfere.—The emoluments arise out of certain fees charged on the issue of the public monies, and they increase, of course, with the increase of the public expenditure. A poundage on all sums issued for the ordinary and extraordinary service of the army, navy, ordnance, &c. besides a fee of two and a half per cent. on pensions and annuities are charged by the tellers. From a report of the commissioners of public accounts, dated in 1782, it appeared that the profits of this office, which in time of peace, and when it was conferred, did not amount to more than 2500l. per annum to each of the tellers, had risen to 7000l. in consequence of the expence incurred during the American war. From the report, of the committee of public expenditure in the year 1808, it appeared that the emoluments of the tellers amounted at that time to 23,000l. per annum each, and there can be no doubt that a farther increase has since taken place. The principle on which the fees are charged is such, that the emoluments increase, as already stated, in propor-

tion to the increase of the public expenditure; and as they are thus indefinite in amount, parliament had upon some occasions interfered, for the purposes of regulation The annuities lately conferred on the princesses had been exempted from any deduction to the tellers. The subsidies granted to foreign powers had always in practice been exempted; and although the tellers had formerly claimed five per cent. on all sums issued for the extraordinary service of the army, yet on one occasion, when a sum of 100,000l. had been granted for this purpose, parliament reduced the fee to three shillings and nine-pence per cent. On these grounds Mr Creevy founded a series of resolutions, the last of which declared, that "it is the duty of parliament, in the present unparalleled state of national expenditure, and public calamity, to exercise its rights still farther over the fees now paid out of the public money at the exchequer, so as to confine the profits of the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Camden to some fixed and settled sum of money, more conformable in amount to the usual grants of public money for public services, and more suited to the present means and resources of the nation."

In support of the resolutions, it was maintained, that the principle which gives existence to and governs every public office, is the benefit of the state. Government requires that various branches of business should be transacted, and persons must be found to transact them. The acceptance of a public office implies an engagement to do the business and a right to a compensation; the officer has powers delegated to him necessary for the execution of his duties, but he has no other right than to the reward of his labour; he has no right to any specific quantity of business; that quantity must fluctuate according to circumstances, or may be regulated by the convenience of the state. If the good of the community require a diminution or annihilation of the business of his office, or the transference of it elsewhere, the officer cannot oppose to new regulations the diminution or annihilation of his profits; because, not the emolument of the officer, but the advantage of the public, was the object of the institution. To suppose a right in him to make such an objection, would be to suppose the office created for his benefit, that is, to suppose it to originate in a violation of public trust, an abuse of power, and an offence against the state. Where law or usage has annexed terms to the grant which limit the right of the executive power to resume or take it away, the reason seems to be, the expediency of leaving the officer in the exercise of the duties of his office, and independent of the influence of that power, which might otherwise at pleasure remove him; but when it is no longer for public convenience that such duties should be exercised, or when the exercise of them becomes an unnecessary expense to the public, it would be an inversion of the principle which governs such establishments to suffer that private emolument, which was no motive for the institution, to prevent or retard the abolition of them. It matters not what the duration or condition of the interest may be, whether for life or years, during good behaviour or pleasure; all offices are equally subject to that governing principle for the sake of which they were created—the good of the public.

The public cannot afford to maintain officers of any description at such an expense. This nation is in debt many hundreds of millions. It raises every year to pay the interest and charges attending that debt an enormous sum, of which a poundage is to be paid to these officers, for business from whence the public derive no be-

nefit; and should additions be made this year to the public debt, unless the legislature will interpose its authority, these fees of office will have their addition likewise. The profits arise in proportion to the increase of the public distress. If parliament thought it reasonable formerly to make a reduction, because 100,000l were issued, what ought to be done now when seven millions are issued for extraordinaries of the army? It is not only the right, therefore, but the duty of parliament to interfere.

But the reasons urged against the resolutions were deemed conclusive.—Some one had said, that he wished this question to be discussed as a mere question of private property between man and man. This was admitted to be a fair principle; but it should always be recollected that one of the parties is the judge on this occasion, as parliament must represent the interest of the public. It could not be denied that the tellership of the exchequer was an ancient office, coeval indeed with the exchequer itself, and legally within the gift of the crown. The right of the present holders to the joint office was a vested right which could not be touched; and the emoluments of the office legally granted, formed also a vested interest which must be protected. Most of the landed estates in the country were enjoyed on no better title than a legal grant from the crown. A case of parliamentary interference to regulate the office of auditor of the exchequer had been referred to; but in that case, Lord Sandys the auditor had by some negligence put it in the power of the attorney-general to have had the grant of the office recalled. It was the interest of the auditor in such circumstances to consent that the office should be reformed in the manner which government thought reasonable.—The conduct of parliament in 1782, when it limited the emoluments of the tellers to be afterwards appointed, clearly recognised the principle that the legislature had no right to interfere with the regular emoluments of persons enjoying vested rights. The most serious consequences might be apprehended from any infringement on the rights of private property; consequences compared with which the receipt of forty or fifty thousand a-year by the present tellers during their lives was of little moment. The proceedings of parliament in 1782, which did not infringe upon those vested interests, while they regulated the emoluments of the tellers who should be subsequently appointed, amounted to a clear parliamentary recognition of the rights, and a parliamentary pledge that they should not be disturbed.—An honourable gentleman (Mr Bankes,) who had lately brought in a bill for the abolition of sinecure offices, uniformly acknowledged the principle, that the vested interests of those to whom the offices had been legally granted should not be disturbed. Who could determine where the opposite principle if once admitted might stop? If parliament should once interfere with the emoluments of the tellers of the exchequer, and declare the compensation to be too great for the merits or labours of the noble lords, what should prevent its interference with the church also, to determine what bishops have rewards disproportioned to their talents and services? Why not enquire into the state of tithes also, and the rights not only of the clergy, but of the lay proprietors? Where would such a scrutiny end if, disregarding the vested rights of individuals, parliament were to enquire into the adequacy or inadequacy of the remuneration for labour or services? Parliament had no right to consider whether Lords Buckingham and Camden had received rewards which were too great; the

only question was, whether they were entitled to the ordinary emoluments of offices which had been legally conferred on them.—The present motion might defeat the object of the sinecure office bill in another place. It might be said, "see what the Commons are doing: they send up a bill professing to respect vested interests, and intending merely to abolish sinecures; but look at their votes, and you will see that they are going on to the destruction even of vested rights." Such arguments would be powerful against a good bill. The office which was the subject of the motion, although obnoxious on account of its enormous profits, could not continue very long; one of the holders was above sixty years old, and the other nearly of the same age, so that parliament would, at no very distant period, be enabled to regulate or abolish the office without injustice to individuals.—These arguments prevailed, and the motion was negatived by a considerable majority. One singular circumstance occurred in this debate; the opposition were still more active to oppose the motion than the ministers; and Messrs Tierney and Ponsonby not only voted but spoke at length on the same side with the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

A bill introduced by Mr Bankes for abolishing sinecure offices, gave rise to a discussion of some interest. The bill had for its object to abolish sinecure offices executed by deputy, preserving, at the same time, a respect for the rights of those in the actual possession of the offices at the time. From the profits of these offices as they should fall in, it was intended to establish a fund out of which the civil servants of the public might, after a certain length of time, be provided with pensions corresponding to their merits. The measure had been raised into favour with the people by many exaggerated accounts of the advantages which it promised to secure; and although it must be obvious to every one, that, in point of economy, such regulations could have no effect, since the profits of the offices abolished were to be given in a different shape to those who either had, or were supposed to have, claims on the public, yet were many efforts made to cast odium on those who ventured to oppose the bill.. Mr Perceval and his friends had not resisted the bill in its progress to the committee, but when the order of the day was moved for taking the report into consideration, a discussion took place, of which the following is the substance:

In support of the bill it was said, that no better method could be found of rewarding high and efficient services in the state than by salaries proportioned to their importance. That as the House had formerly agreed to certain resolutions which laid down the principle that sinecure offices should either be abolished or regulated, it was bound to support the present bill, which was, in fact, framed upon these resolutions. —An opinion had been intimated that the power of the crown had not increased of late years; but was it possible to look at the immense expenditure of the country; at the great military and naval establishments; the vast patronage thus placed in the hands of the crown; at the increase of the revenue, and of the number of people employed in its collection; was it possible to look at these things without being convinced that dependence on the crown was extended to all parts of the country in a degree quite unexampled in former times? It was no light consideration, also, that some of the greatest commercial and corporate bodies in the country were in the habit of looking up to the ministers of the crown for favour and protection. There had been times, indeed, when the influence

of the crown was more openly exerted in the Commons House of Parliament; but could there be a doubt that much of open corruption still remained, and had become an object of just abhorrence to the people? The present measure, if adopted, would have the beneficial effect of purifying the future parliaments of the country.—It was enough to excite suspicion, that the offices which this bill proposed to abolish, were represented as, in some measure, the outworks necessary to the protection of the crown, while they are, in truth, as a mill-stone attached to the monarchy, threatening to weigh it to the ground.—The recent vote of the House, by which the sinecure office of paymaster of widows' pensions was abolished, had raised the character of the Commons in the estimation of the country. There never was a moment when it was more important to preserve and increase that estimation. Let the House now prove that the act alluded to proceeded not from the effervescence of the moment, but that the Commons were prepared to advance upon principle to the abolition of sinecures at once useless and odious.—It might be wrong to delude the people with the idea that the measures now recommended would materially diminish the public burdens; but great joy would be diffused by the conviction that parliament had determined to sanction such branches of expenditure only as the public service indispensably required.—If the bill passed into a law, it would remove much of the existing corruptions of parliament. Had Mr Pitt and Mr Burke been alive, they would have given their cordial support to the bill, which did not propose to deprive the crown of the power of rewarding merit, but to prevent the public money from being lavished in disgraceful sinecures. The bill before the House would form a safe guard to the crown, particularly at a time when the people were so much disgusted with sinecures. The House had, by a former vote, given the country a pledge of its independence, and would, by the vote of that night, redeem this pledge.

It was answered, that, as the House appeared to be in some measure pledged to the principle of the bill, it had been the wish of those who opposed it, that it should be carried through the committee, and presented in the most perfect shape to which it could be brought; but now that this had been done, it was proper that the objections to it, both in the details and in the principle, should be considered.—In considering the details, it appeared that the bill proposed a most inconvenient union of different offices, as in the instance of the keeper of the great seal, and justice general of Scotland; while the proposal of retaining many offices, and abolishing the salaries attached to them, was rather an extraordinary one.—The bill proposed, also, to incorporate the office of auditor-general with that of president of the council, and thus to save the salary of the former place; but it was difficult to conceive upon what principle of justice the president of the council could be called on, without any additional remuneration, to take upon himself the responsibility of auditor of the exchequer. It had been said that this office might be discharged as hitherto by deputy; but it was contrary to every principle of justice to make any man responsible for the conduct of a deputy not of his own appointing.—The bill also provided, that the office of clerk of the pells should be united to that of keeper of the privy seal; yet, on a very recent occasion, when money was to be raised, the deputy clerk of the pells exercised a controul upon the privy seal.—The bill, after stating the offices to be abolished in Ireland, contained this re-

markable clause, "provided always that no offices shall from henceforward be granted in reversion." Now when all the sinecures are abolished, nothing can be left of which the reversion may be given, as it is well known that efficient offices cannot be thus granted.—In the offices of clerk of the first-fruits and *custos brevium* a fee-simple had been granted; it was absurd, therefore, to talk of making any alteration on them, while a disposition to protect all vested interests was professed.—The law offices in the disposal of the chief justices were of course vested interests in the present holders which could not be taken from them. The labours of these high officers, particularly of the chief justice of the King's Bench, would be very ill paid, but for the addition to their other emoluments derived from their right to dispose of the offices which it was now intended to abolish; and, if the abolition should take place, the salaries of the judges must be greatly augmented.—But the principle of the bill was perfectly absurd and extravagant; it amounted in fact to this, that the crown should not have the power of securing for the public service men who might be the most capable of serving it with advantage, unless they chanced to be in circumstances which might enable them to resign without inconvenience all other professions or pursuits. It is only by such places as those which this bill would abolish, that the crown has the power of prevailing on men who are not independent in their fortunes, and who must look to their own exertions for the support of their families, to enter into the public service. Suppose that the sovereign, at any future period, were to be surrounded by aristocratical combinations, and that to preserve his proper place in the constitution, he should deem it necessary to call to his service some gentleman from the other side of the house. The gentleman most worthy of being selected, might, in duty to himself and his family, be compelled to refuse office, unless the crown had something to bestow in addition to the regular salary. The existence of sinecure offices would, in the above circumstances, contribute materially to the independence of the crown, and to the support of its proper rank in the constitution.—Some persons conceived the influence of the crown to be exorbitant; but an appeal might be made to the good sense of the country, whether that influence was too great. The progress of information and the accumulation of wealth had communicated of late years to the aristocratic and democratic branches of the constitution, far more weight and influence, than all the existing offices together, with the increased patronage of the army, and the collection of the revenue, had bestowed on the crown. Even the late debates and divisions in the House of Commons proved, that there existed no such preponderating influence as the crown was supposed to exert over parliament.—The proposed measure could not be a matter of indifference as it respected the crown; and it was for the wisdom of parliament to say, whether it would not lead to the dangerous diminution of an influence which is by no means too extensive. A great blow would be given to the monarchy were the crown deprived of the means of calling any man to its service not completely independent in his fortune. A pension, after service for a certain number of years, would by no means form an adequate inducement, as every man of proper feeling would prefer the means of providing permanently for his family, to any provision which was to be made merely for his own life.—These arguments proved unsuccessful; the

report of the committee was agreed to, and the bill ordered to be read a third time.

The enormous amount of the expenditure of Great Britain, and the system of finance which it has been found convenient to adopt, have involved the public accounts in great perplexity and confusion. This is the result, however, of the magnitude and intricacy of the subject alone; for it cannot be denied that the utmost skill and talent, as well as the greatest integrity, have been displayed by government in reiterated attempts to simplify and familiarize the details to the public mind. As the subject is of the greatest interest and importance to the country, the knowledge and acuteness of the most distinguished members on both sides of the House of Commons, are annually employed in its investigation; and so great was the expenditure during the present year, so severe were the difficulties which pressed upon the national resourses, that a greater share of attention than usual was devoted to the state of the finances. The necessity of imposing some new taxes drew from Mr Vansittart, who had succeeded Mr Perceval as Chancellor of the Exchequer, a detailed exposition of the national burdens and resources, which was eminently distinguished for perspicuity. Mr Huskisson, Mr Tierney, and Sir Thomas Turton, took an active share in this important discussion; and various resolutions were moved, with the view of exhibiting a distinct statement to the legislature and to the country of the situation in which the empire stood at this time, with reference to its expenditure and resources.

The financial measures for the year had been nearly arranged by Mr Perceval before his death; and his successor had, with some exceptions, bestowed entire approbation on the plans of that eminent man.—Mr Vansittart, in the speech which he delivered on bringing forward the budget, recapitulated the charges of the year, and afterwards proceeded to the statement of the ways and means by which it was proposed that those charges should be defrayed.—For the navy, exclusive of ordnance for the sea service, the sum already voted was 19,702,399l.; for the army, including barracks and commissariat, and the military service of Ireland, 17,756,160l. The extraordinaries of the army incurred last year, beyond the sum granted, amounted to 2,300,000l.; besides which, there had been voted on the same account for the present year, 5,000,000l. for Great Britain, and 200,000l. for Ireland; and for the ordnance, including Ireland, 5,279,897l. The miscellaneous services were stated at 2,350,000l.; and a vote of credit of 3,000,000l. for Great Britain, and 200,000l. for Ireland, was proposed.—The subsidies granted in the present year were nearly the same as in the last, being for Sicily 400,000l., and for Portugal 200,000l. These several items amounted to 58,188,456l.—To these sums were added 100,292l. for repayment of part of the loyalty loan, 1,700,000l. voted for interest on exchequer bills, and 2,387,600l. for exchequer bills issued on the aids of the year. These three items, amounting to 4,187,892l., constituted the separate charge of Great Britain, and when added to the sum of 58,188,456l., which was the total of the supplies before stated, made the general amount of 62,376,348l. Deducting from this the Irish charges of 7,025,700l., the result was, that the total of the supplies to be provided by Great Britain for the year 1812, was 55,3 0.648l.

Such was the enormous amount of the charge. The following are the means by which the Chancellor of the

Exchequer proposed that it should be met:—The annual duties were taken as usual at 3,000,000l.; the surplus of the consolidated fund, including the property tax, 20,400,000l.; the lottery 300,000l.; the loan in the 5 per cent. annuities, contributed by the subscribers of the exchequer bills in the spring of the present year, 6,789,625l.; and exchequer bills intended to be issued on the vote of credit 3,000,000l. This last sum would make no addition to the unfunded debt, an equal sum granted on the vote of credit of the last year having been funded and not replaced by any fresh issue. The old naval stores which had been carried to the public account, would produce 441,218l.; the surplus of ways and means of last year, 2,209,626l.; and last of all came the loan contracted for on the preceding day, 15,650,000l. These various items amounted to 55,390,469l.; and the ways and means thus exceeded the supplies by about 40,000l.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in further explanation of his views, remarked, that the surplus of the consolidated fund had been estimated upon the average produce of the principal branches of the revenue in the last three years, adding what was necessary to complete the estimate of the yearly receipt of the permanent duties imposed in the last session. The produce of all the duties in the quarter ending the 5th of July, 1811, fell considerably short of the quarter ending the 5th of July, 1810; the quarter ending the 10th of October, 1811, fell short also of the corresponding quarter in 1810; but the quarter ending the 5th of January, 1812, exceeded the quarter ending the 5th of January, 1811, by 31,000l.; and the quarter ending the 5th of April, 1812, exceeded the corresponding quarter in 1811, by no less than 463,000l. a sum much surpassing any increase which the new duties could have occasioned, and which sufficiently proved that the revenue was, upon the whole, in an improving state.—The estimate of the war taxes had been formed upon the average of the three years ending the 5th of April, 1812. The war duties of customs and excise, with some smaller items, amounted to 10,041,566l.; of the property-tax there would remain for the service of the present year 13,055,000l.; and adding that sum to the amount of the customs and excise, there would be a total of war taxes of 23,096,000l. From this sum there was deducted 2,706,000l., appropriated to the charge of various loans, which left for the ways and means of the present year, 20,390,000l.—The sum raised on account of Great Britain, by the loan concluded the preceding day, was 15,650,000l. The capital created on account of this sum was 27,544,000l. 3 per cent. stock; on which an annual charge of 1,110,023l. would arise. The rate of interest to the subscribers would be 5l. 5s. 7d. per cent., and the total charge to the public, 7l. 1s. 10½d. This might appear a high rate of interest, but it should be remembered, that the sum borrowed in the present year had rarely been equalled; and so large a sum had never been raised on better terms in any period of war. There had been a former loan in the course of the present year, and exchequer bills had been funded to a considerable amount. The exchequer bills funded and the 5 per cent. loan, amounted together to 12,221,325l., making in 5 per cent. stock, a capital of 13,199,031l., the interest of which was 659,951l., and the sinking fund 131,990l., amounting, together with the charge of management, to 795,901l. The rate of interest on this sum was 5l. 8s., and the total charge 6l. 10s. 2¾d. per cent. The charge to the public on the whole money transactions of the year, therefore, so far as respected the funded

debt, was 6l. 16s. 9d. per cent.; and the total amount to be provided for, 1,905,924l.

In proposing new taxes to meet this additional charge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer departed, in some measure, from the plans of his predecessor.—His first proposition went merely to discontinue the bounty on the exportation of printed goods. This bounty had grown from a small charge to a very large one, amounting, upon an average of the last three years, to the sum of 308,000l., a circumstance, in one respect, highly satisfactory, as it shewed the great increase which had taken place in the exportation of the manufacture; but it also proved that the necessity of granting a bounty to encourage this exportation had ceased, and that considerable advantage might be derived from its suppression. Printed goods, from the improvement in the manufacture, and the extensive use of machinery, could now be afforded much cheaper, without the bounty, than they had been formerly even with its assistance. The state of the world, with respect to commerce, was peculiarly favourable to the discontinuance of the bounty system. Wherever British manufactures were permitted to enter, their superiority was universally acknowledged; where they did not find their way, it was not on account of their dearness or inferior quality, but because they were excluded by rigorous prohibitions: but when these should cease, the country might again expect to see its manufactures spreading themselves over the continent without the assistance of bounties. That which it was now proposed to discontinue, amounted to no more than ½d. per yard on printed goods of the worst quality, and 1½d. a yard on the best, an amount much within the ordinary fluctuations of price from accidental causes. This proposition, therefore, appeared free from all reasonable objection; for the remainder of the plan, it could only be said, that in the choice of evils the least had been selected.

An additional duty was first proposed on tanned hides and skins. That this tax would, in some measure, fall upon the poor by affecting the price of shoes, was admitted; but, in other respects, the article appeared a very fit object of taxation; since, in the long list of our taxes, it was almost the only one on which no addition had been made for a great number of years. The former duties had been imposed so long ago as the years 1709 and 1711; and it was only proposed, after the lapse of a whole century, to double them. Another recommendation of the new tax on leather at this time, was the cheap and plentiful supply of the raw material, which had, of late years, been introduced from South America. This supply had been estimated as equal to one-third of the whole manufacture; and had occasioned a very considerable fall of price in the article, both for home consumption and for exportation. Calculating upon an average of the produce of the former duties for the last three years, the additional duty was expected to produce 325,000l. a year.

An additional duty was next proposed on glass. The duties on this article had been considerably increased in 1805; but, after an extensive enquiry among the manufacturers, Mr Perceval had been convinced, that an additional tax would not be injurious to the trade. It was not probable, indeed, that the consumption would be lessened by the increase of price which this duty would occasion, as glass was an article very little in use among the lower classes of society; and such was the opinion of the manufacturers themselves, who only asked protection

against foreign competition, by sufficient duties on importation, and proper drawbacks on exportation. The produce of this tax, calculating as before, on an average of the last three years, would be 328,000l.

The next proposition went to add a duty equivalent to 10 per cent. on those already existing on tobacco, an article of extensive, yet luxurious, rather than necessary, use; and one which afforded the best criterion of its ability to bear an additional tax, namely, that the consumption of it had progressively increased under the former duties. There was no reason to believe that the proposed addition would either diminish the consumption, or materially increase the frauds upon the revenue; and, estimating the produce on an average as before, it might safely be taken at 107,000l.

A regulation of the duties already paid on property sold by auction was also suggested. It was well known that landed estates and other kinds of property were frequently put up to auction, not for the purposes of a fair sale, but of ascertaining their value, with a view to private bargains; they were then bought in, by which the duty was avoided, and afterwards disposed of by private contract, at a price founded upon the biddings which had taken place. It had been the intention of the legislature, that all persons who obtained the benefit of the competition at a public sale, should be subject to the charge imposed upon auctions. It was now proposed, therefore, that property put up to auction should be charged with duty, whether actually sold or bought in; but that, in case it should appear at the end of twelve months that the property still belonged to its original owner, the duty should be repaid. It was, also, well known that many articles, particularly of imported merchandise, were exempted from duty, although sold by public auction. It was a common practice in sales to mingle such privileged goods, with those which were not privileged, by which means frauds on the revenue were frequently accomplished. It was therefore proposed, that when any goods liable to duty were introduced into a sale of goods which were exempted from it, the whole should be immediately rendered chargeable with the duty. From the nature of the case, nothing like an accurate estimate could be formed of the produce of these regulations; but, on a due consideration of all the circumstances, Mr Perceval had thought that it would not be overrated at 100,000l.

The articles hitherto enumerated, except the bounty on printed goods, were all duties of excise. The next proposal related to the postage of letters: an addition was intended of a penny on every single letter carried more than twenty miles, whether from the metropolis or the provincial post towns. The necessity of increasing this tax, which must operate as a considerable charge on commercial correspondence, was matter of regret; yet, when the satisfaction and convenience derived from the post-office, and the progressive increase of correspondence through the country were considered, no duty would, perhaps, be paid with less reluctance. The proposed increase might be estimated, according to the present extent of correspondence, at 220,000l.

All the above articles were such as had been selected by the late Mr Perceval, and would have formed part of the plan which he intended to have proposed to parliament. The remaining deficiency would, according to the intention of the late minister, have been supplied by a tax on private brewing.—In the year 1806, when the Marquis of Lansdowne held the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, he had suggested a similar tax, which was

strongly opposed, on the ground of its bringing private families under the jurisdiction of the excise; an objection, the full force of which must have been admitted, if means had not been taken to avoid all scrutiny by an easy commutation upon the principle of the assessed taxes. The plan of Mr Perceval was, indeed, free from the objection which had been stated, as it proceeded upon the principle of a rate according to the numbers in each family. To the proposition, even when thus modified, however, insuperable objections occurred. In the first place, the produce of the intended duty taken at the rate of five shillings a-head (the proposed assessment) had been greatly miscalculated, and instead of 500,000l., which was the sum required, would only amount to 250,000l. or 300,000l. But a still stronger objection occurred to the tax, from its unequal operation on the poorer classes. A poor man would brew the exact quantity required for the consumption of his family calculated upon the most frugal plan, while a rich man would provide for the entertainment of many visitors, and for the much more liberal consumption of his household: The consequence therefore would be, that if the tax were assessed at an equal rate upon each person in the family, the poor man would pay upon each barrel of a much inferior liquor a higher rate of duty than the rich would be charged for the best which could be prepared.—In lieu of this tax, various minute additions were therefore proposed on such of the assessed taxes as operate on the principle of sumptuary laws. The amount of these additions was calculated at 515,000l.; and the whole of the proposed duties would thus amount to 1,903,000l. It was very satisfactory to know, that after the country had so often appeared to have exhausted its resources, and after it had been so often stated that no fit subject for taxation remained, it was still practicable to provide, with so little pressure on the people, and especially on the lower classes of the community, so large a sum as that of which the details have just been explained.

The measures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of which the above is a sketch, met with universal approbation; and every one was astonished, that by means apparently so simple, so great an addition could be made to the revenue of the country.—The fall which had taken place, however, in the public funds, and the comparatively disadvantageous terms on which the late loan had been effected, called forth some observations from Mr Huskisson, whose opinion, in matters of finance, is entitled to great respect. This gentleman ascribed these unfavourable symptoms, in a great measure, to the support which England is accustomed to give to the credit of Ireland; and he stated some very singular circumstances respecting the revenue of the sister kindgom. It appeared, that last year the interest upon the debt of Ireland was 4,400,000l., exceeding by half a million the whole amount of her revenue; so that, in fact, she had no revenue at all which was productive of benefit to the empire. In the course of twelve years, since the Union, the addition made to her public debt was 68,500,000l.; the interest upon this sum 3,190,000l.; while the increased revenue to provide for the payment of that interest did not exceed 1,370,000l. Such had been the condition of her financial concerns since the Union; nor did it appear that they were now in a train of amendment.—The increase in the charge for the management of the revenue was not less singular. Before the Union it was 350,000l., and now it was no less than 900,000l., although the revenue to be collected had only been augmented by 1,370,000l.; so that no less a sum than

550,000l. was charged for managing a revenue of 1,370,000l. Such a state of things imperiously demanded investigation. Although the Irish finances were in this unprosperous condition, it was universally admitted, that no part of the united kingdom was more rapidly improving; the rent of land had risen prodigiously; the progress made in agriculture had been great; the manufactures of Ireland had not been materially injured by the war; yet it was not a little singular, that the produce of almost all the taxes in Ireland had of late years declined in proportion to her prosperity and her means of paying them. In the year 1799, the impost upon leather gave a revenue of 55,000l. and in 1811, it had fallen to 40,000l., though the consumption of that article must have greatly increased. The same remark applied to the tax on malt and beer. In 1799, the average quantity on which the duty was charged was 12,000 barrels; in the last year it was only 7,000. To what then was this diminution owing? It was certain, that, besides great laxity in the collection of the revenue, there existed something like a connivance at fraud. The country was deeply indebted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland, for the unceasing pains he had taken to secure a more adequate collection of the taxes; but he had entirely failed, since nothing but a complete change of system could effect so desirable an object. The defalcation would appear the more remarkable when it was understood, that in Ireland not one direct tax was known; and that in this respect her situation was better than that of any other country of the world, with the exception of the United States. The public credit of Ireland stands much higher than that of Great Britain; and yet this country was lending to the sister kingdom assistance which she could by no means afford. If the public credit of Great Britain had not been thus grievously injured, the loan might have been contracted for on much better terms than those actually obtained.

Upon a review of the state of the national finances, Mr Huskisson declared, that an attention to economy had become indispensable; that considerable retrenchments ought to be made in the public establishments, particularly in the naval department, and that a change of system, as to matters of finance, was imperiously demanded by the circumstances of the country.—Sir Thomas Turton and Mr Tierney were of the same opinion; and in order to give a distinct view of the finances of the country, these gentlemen respectively moved a series of resolutions, embracing a comparative statement of the income, public expenditure, and debt, as in the years 1802 and 1812. Mr Tierney's resolutions had no other object than to explain the progress of the public expenditure, and thus to enforce the necessity of some plan of economy and financial reform; but Sir Thomas Turton's views were somewhat different, his last resolution having concluded, by declaring the necessity of peace, to avert the financial ruin with which the country was threatened. There were few, indeed, who concurred with him in this opinion*; and as it appeared to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the resolutions proposed by both these gentlemen were inaccurate and defective, he himself came forward with a series of counter resolutions which will be found in the Appendix.* They afford by far the most distinct and comprehensive view of the state of the commerce and revenue of the country, of the public income, expenditure, and debts, funded and unfunded, at the pe-

* Vide Appendix.

riod to which they refer, that is now before the public; and if the sketch which they present of the growing debts and burdens of the country be such as to teach her an impressive lesson of prudence and economy, it is no less calculated, by the display of her great wealth and resources, to silence those shallow persons who are so forward to announce to the world, that a failure of pecuniary means might have compelled England to submit her fortunes to the insolence of her enemies.

CHAP. IV.

State of the Nightly Watch and Police of the Metropolis. Account of the Riots in different Parts of the Country. Bill for increasing the Punishment of Persons breaking or destroying Frames. Bill for preventing the administering or taking unlawful Oaths. Report of a Secret Committee on the disturbed State of certain Counties. Bill for the Preservation of the Public Peace in the disturbed Counties.

THE feelings of the people of England were, about the beginning of this year, wound up to the highest pitch of amazement and horror, by the perpetration of barbarities hitherto unparalleled in the annals of the country. Crimes of deep atrocity, of wanton and savage cruelty, have been of rare occurrence in this island; and although offences against property have increased in full proportion to the growing wealth and luxury of the people, it is to the honour of the national character, that crimes of aggravated baseness and enormity have been little known amongst us. In some foreign countries, excesses of all kinds are so frequent, that they excite neither indignation nor horror; they are enumerated among the ordinary occurrences of the day, and quickly sink into oblivion. When such acts are perpetrated in this country, one general movement of detestation pervades the public mind; the whole powers of the magistracy are put in the most vigorous operation; the attention of the legislature is instantly roused, and the land resounds with shouts of indignation and vengeance.

The solitary malignity of a wretch whose name will in future be classed with those of the monsters who have outraged and astounded humanity, had exterminated two whole families of innocent and unoffending beings, with circumstances of matchless cruelty.—The metropolis was in a ferment; alarm and distraction pervaded all corners of it; every one dreaded, lest himself and all who were dear to him, might become the next victims of a malignity, which seemed to transcend all limits, and to defy all calculation. The nature and extent of the conspiracy were, for some time, unknown; and as no one could think that a single bloodthirsty monster could have required so much to satiate him, the existence of an extensive and formidable combination was very generally believed. In the alarm of the moment, many causeless arrests took place, and many innocent persons were exposed to a painful and disgraceful scrutiny. The real criminal, however, was at last secured; yet owing to a degree of negligence which must for ever reflect discredit on those to whose care he was entrusted, he was suffered to elude by suicide the vengeance of the law. Conjectures, formed in the moment of alarm and dismay, were contradicted, to the surprise and relief of all; the ruffian, who

had already disappointed the justice of the country, was ascertained to have been the solitary actor in the late atrocious scenes, and people seemed to have learned, for the first time, the extent which human ferocity was capable of reaching.

Some great fault, it was supposed, must be chargeable on a system of police, which exposed the inhabitants of London to such dangers, and as the first suggestions of fear are always extravagant, many persons would have been willing to have surrendered their liberties, with the view of securing protection to their persons. A cry was raised for the establishment of a preventative armed police; but the madness of such a proposal could not long escape observation.

A preventative armed police can be nothing but a military police, and to subject the metropolis, as well as all the more considerable cities in the kingdom, to the government of soldiers, would have been, in fact, to surrender the liberties of the country. Those who appeared to believe that the soldiers might easily have been retained in subordination to the civil power, must have known little of the character of an army. It can never be safe to tell a body of men, who are naturally desirous of pre-eminence, that the tranquillity of the state cannot be preserved without their aid, nor is it possible, after such a declaration, to enforce respect to the civil power, which thus declares itself incompetent to the exercise of its most important functions. But besides being more dangerous, a military police must be always less effective than a well-ordered civil police; close and patient attention to the discovery and prevention of crimes constitutes the most valuable quality of all establishments of this kind; a quality which can never be expected in soldiers, whose mode of life tends to encourage in them habits of a kind so opposite. The absurdity of this plan, in short, which was the mere offspring of a momentary alarm, soon became apparent, even to those who had originally proposed it, and the project of a military police was speedily abandoned.

The defects, however, in many parts of the actual establishment could not escape observation.—It was not till the year 1774, that parliament interfered with the police of the metropolis, by passing an act, which applied only to fifteen of the most populous parishes. Each parish had, in former times, provided the means for its own protection; but by the act referred to, directors and trustees were appointed, under whose controul, the watch, the patrole, and the beadles, were placed. The immense increase of the metropolis, however, since the act was passed, had gone far to destroy its efficacy; and various abuses had crept in, by which some of the most important provisions of the statute were disregarded. The act had, in particular, provided, that none but able-bodied men should be appointed to guard the streets at night, a provision which had been notoriously evaded for a number of years. It was the opinion of government, however, that the laws already in existence, if properly enforced, would, with some slight alterations and amendments, be found quite sufficient for the preservation of the public peace; but before recommending any measure to parliament, it was the wish of ministers that due enquiry should be made into all the circumstances by a committee of the House of Commons.

Mr Ryder, the secretary of state for the home department, accordingly moved for the appointment of a committee to examine into the state of the nightly watch of the metropolis and the parishes adjacent.—It was stated on this occasion, that although no system of police, however vigorous, could

have prevented the late atrocities, it was the opinion of government that these shocking occurrences afforded of themselves sufficient ground for enquiry. All intention of resorting to a military police was anxiously disclaimed, not only on account of the danger with which such a measure would be attended to the liberties of the country, but on account of its inefficacy to secure even those objects for which some timid persons might be willing to surrender their rights. It was remarked, that even in countries where the preservation of the peace is committed to the care of an armed police, furnished with all the powers of the most vigorous despotism, atrocities such as those which had thrown this country into a state of consternation, were frequently committed.—It was a melancholy fact, however, that, making all due allowance for the exaggerations which at this time prevailed, offences, though not of the deepest enormity, had been multiplied beyond the experience of former years; and it was this circumstance which imperiously called upon parliament to institute the proposed enquiry. The most prominent defects in the police establishment arose out of the improper appointment of weak and disabled persons for the nightly watch, many of whom, it was generally known, had procured their nominations to prevent them from becoming burdens upon the parish.—It appeared that an improvement in the state of the watch had, in one instance at least, been attended with the most signal benefit. The parish of Christ Church, Spitalfields, which had formerly exhibited a scene of riot, uproar, and crime, had, by a parochial exertion tending to improve the nightly watch, become of late almost proverbial for its good order and regularity. But, at all events, a more proper course could not in such a case be followed than the appointment of a committee composed of gentlemen possessing local knowledge, and vested with powers to collect all the information which could be brought together on the subject.

Sir Samuel Romilly, who is sometimes accused of being more partial to a fine theory, than to an obvious and practical remedy for an existing grievance, complained much of the narrow view of the subject which had been taken by government, and proposed that an enquiry should be instituted, not only into the state of the nightly watch, but into the causes of the alarming increase of felonies and crimes. He remarked, that there had been a great and alarming increase of late years in the trials for felonies of various kinds; a circumstance which was the more surprising, that in other countries, one advantage, at least, derived from a state of war, had always been a diminution in the number of crimes. He imputed this singular phenomenon partly to the frequency of capital punishments, but chiefly to the circumstance of promiscuous imprisonment; the youngest and the oldest felons are often confined together, and when discharged, no means of gaining a livelihood are provided for them. He thought that the late unusual discharge of convicts from the hulks had greatly increased the number of crimes; and that the evil had been greatly aggravated by many radical defects in the system of police. He disapproved of the rewards given to police officers for the detection of crimes of a certain magnitude, which gave them an interest to encourage the growth of offences, till they had attained that pitch when it might be convenient for the officers to put them down. Rewards ought not, in general, to be given to police officers; but, if given at all, should be confined to accessaries after the fact,

by means of whom useful discoveries might sometimes be made. He imputed the great increase of crimes, and the corruption of public morals, to the mischievous effects of the lottery, which was encouraged by government for the paltry revenue which it afforded. He censured the familiarities said to exist betwixt the police officers and their prey; and stated, that the officers were accustomed to go into places open for the reception and entertainment of common thieves and other abandoned characters, much in the same way as a gentleman would go to that part of his manor where he expected to start game.—Mr Smith, who concurred with Sir Samuel Romilly, moved an amendment, to extend the power of the committee to an enquiry into the state of the police as well as of the nightly watch.—Mr Perceval replied to these speakers; but declined entering the wide field of speculation which they had opened. He insisted that the proposed remedy, if a good one in itself, should not be disregarded, because other plans might also be attended with advantage, and maintained, that, as the evil was pressing, it would be very absurd were the legislature to wander for the present into an extensive and embarrassing enquiry, such as that which had been proposed by the preceding speakers. He ridiculed the notion of refusing immediate protection to the metropolis, because the surrounding country might afterwards suffer from the depredations of the expelled criminals; and wisely thought that the prospect of a future and contingent evil could afford no ground for refusing to correct one, which, in fact, had already grown to an enormous magnitude, and which the legislature had the power of at least alleviating. He protested against encumbering the present enquiry with the business of a committee of penitentiary houses, and with the grave and difficult question as to the expediency of granting rewards as a part of the police system. He remarked, that the supposed familiarity betwixt the officers and delinquents (which was at all events not new, since it been a subject of common-place conversation for a century past) could not have been the immediate causes of the late unprecedented outrages; and expressed some doubt, whether a refined expedient of Sir Samuel Romilly to enable police officers to take up persons, not for the crimes which they had actually committed, but on suspicion of others which they might possibly commit, could well be carried into effect.—Lord Cochrane ascribed the late atrocities to the pension list; and Sir Francis Burdett, who concurred in opinion with him, thought that no adequate remedy could be provided for evils so great, except by the abolition of sinecures, and by a recurrence to the old and wholesome laws of Edward the First.—Mr Sheridan ridiculed the proposal to enquire into the state of the nightly watch, as totally inadequate to the object in view; he maintained, that the act already conferred all the powers which were necessary to make the watch efficient, and professed to discover in the proposition of Mr Ryder, a most alarming attempt to break in upon the charter of the city of London. He censured the conduct of the magistrates during the late enquiry; they had been foolish enough, he said, to countenance all the prejudices of the mob against Irishmen; they had shewn themselves so deficient in prudence, as to seize upon every one who had a torn coat and dirty shirt to justify suspicion.

The alarm of the country was great, the exigency was pressing, and the desire of government to provide a remedy was at least sincere; while the reme-

dy proposed by the ministers was one which had been found of great practical benefit in a parish in the metropolis in which it had formerly been introduced. These were strong reasons in support of the motion, while the necessity of dispatch, in a case in which the public feeling had been so strongly expressed, could admit of no dispute. The motion of Mr Ryder was, therefore, agreed to by the House; the committee was appointed; a large stock of useful information was obtained, and a solid foundation laid for those measures which the public safety at this period so strongly demanded

A very alarming disposition to riot and disorder had manifested itself in different parts of England towards the close of the last year. The commercial difficulties to which the country was at this time exposed, the scarcity of work, and the high price of provisions, might, in the first instance, have excited this unhappy spirit; but there can be no doubt, that, when once raised, it was powerfully fostered and sustained by factious publications disseminated among the people, and by declamatory harangues which charged their sufferings upon the government, and attempted to justify the atrocities to which some deluded wretches had proceeded. The disposition to a system of combined operations first manifested itself in the neighbourhood of the town of Nottingham, in the destruction of some newly-invented stocking-frames by small parties of men, principally stocking-weavers, who had assembled from the neighbourhood. The first object of the rioters, therefore, was of the most detestable character,—the destruction of an improved machinery, by which the manufacturers of the country obtained so great an advantage over those of other nations, both in the cheapness and quality of their goods. The rioters, however, supposing that the introduction of machinery had been the chief cause of the difficulty which they had felt in finding employment, proceeded with that ignorant fury which always characterises the operation of a mob, thus to destroy the very sources of public prosperity. By degrees they became more numerous and more formidable, and, having obtained arms, disturbed the whole country between Nottingham and Mansfield, destroying frames almost without resistance —A new machine had been invented, by which the manufacturers were enabled to avail themselves of the assistance of women, for work in which men had been before employed; and this circumstance tended still further to inflame the spirit of riot and disorder. It is probable that the bands of rioters who first took the field, consisted of persons who had been actually thrown out of employment by the improvements of machinery; and their operations were, in the first instance, confined to the destruction of frames, owned or worked by those who were willing to labour at reduced prices. A vigorous resistance, however, was made to these outrages; an armed force, consisting at first of local militia and yeomanry, was assembled, to which were added about four hundred special constables; the rioters were dispersed, and it was hoped that the disturbances were at an end. But this expectation proved fallacious; for, about the end of November, the outrages were renewed in a more serious and systematic form; money was levied by the rioters on the villages in which they destroyed the frames; and as the number of the insurgents increased, the outrages were by the month of December, extended over Derbyshire and Leicestershire. New measures for suppressing the disorders were adopted; the armed force at Nottingham was increased, the command-

ing officer of the district was ordered to repair to that place, and two of the most experienced police magistrates were sent down from London to assist the local authorities.

But the execution of the law was found to be very difficult; for the rioters were too well aware of the advantages of system in their operations, and had become too great favourites with the mob, to be either easily apprehended or convicted. At the spring assizes, however, in Nottingham, seven persons were convicted and sentenced to transportation. The ancient system of watch and ward was renewed in the disturbed counties, and the legislature interfered to increase the punishment for the destruction of frames. But the spirit of insurrection and disorder still extended in spite of every precaution; at Stockport in Cheshire subscriptions were instituted for the persons in custody in Nottinghamshire; anonymous letters were circulated threatening still farther devastations on machinery, and attempts were made to carry these threats into execution. The spirit of disorder rapidly spread through the neighbourhood; inflammatory placards, inviting the people to tumults, were dispersed; illegal oaths were administered; riots were excited in various places; houses were plundered by persons in disguise, and a general rising was threatened early in the month of May. Aston-under-Line, Eccles, and Middletown, became scenes of confusion. At the last-mentioned place, a most daring attack was, on the 20th of April, made on the manufactory of a Mr Burton, in which the rioters were at first repulsed, and five of their number killed by the military assembled to protect the works; but a second attack was made two days afterwards, in which Mr Burton's dwelling house was burned to the ground.—At Stockport, the riots were renewed about the middle of April, and a regular system of discipline was established among the insurgents. A meeting of rioters on a heath, about two miles from Stockport, for the purposes of military discipline, was discovered and dispersed on the morning of the 15th of April. Manchester now became a scene of disorder; on the 26th and 27th of April, some thousands of strangers appeared in the town; the local militia was called out, and a considerable military force assembled, but the strangers had dispersed by the 28th. Nocturnal meetings, however, were held for the purposes of military exercise; arms were seized in various places by the disaffected, and contributions in money were levied. Bolton in the Moors, Newcastle-under-Line, Wigan, Warrington, and other towns, exhibited symptoms of disturbance; a spirit of tumult also appeared at Carlisle; and at Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, the proceedings of the rioters were marked with peculiar atrocity.—A large manufactory at West Houghton, in the neighbourhood of Bolton in the Moors, was, with great dexterity, destroyed on the 24th of April, in spite of every effort which could be made for its protection. The plan of attack was in this instance executed with singular ability. The rioters first of all assembled; but, on the appearance of a military force, they immediately dispersed. The military having returned to their quarters, however, the rioters reappeared, assailed and forced the manufactory, set it on fire, and again dispersed, before the military could be brought to the spot.—At Huddersfield, in the west-riding of Yorkshire and throughout that neighbourhood, the destruction of dressing and shearing machines began early in the month of February; fire-arms were seized in the course of March; and a constable was shot in his own house. Various attempts were made to destroy

the mills in the neighbourhood, in some of which the rioters were successful; but they did not confine their operations to such objects. Mr Horsefall, a respectable merchant and mill owner in the neighbourhood of Huddersfield, was shot about five o'clock in the afternoon of the 28th of April, when returning from market, and died on the 30th of the same month; and although a reward of 2000l. was offered for the apprehension of the murderers, a considerable time elapsed before any discovery could be made. When Mr Horsefall was shot, the populace surrounded and reviled him; and allowed the assassins to retire to an adjoining wood. To such a pitch were the atrocities of these miscreants carried, that they nearly killed a young woman in the streets of Leeds, because she had been seen near the spot where a murder was committed, and might have been able to give evidence to lead to the discovery of the murderers. At this place, also, the rioters determined on the destruction of all goods which had been prepared otherwise than by manual operation, and proceeded to execute their purpose with unusual dexterity. Some mills at Rawdon, a village about eight miles from Leeds, were, on the morning of the 24th of March, attacked by a body of armed men, who proceeded with the greatest circumspection to seize the watchmen, and to place guards at every neighbouring cottage; they afterwards entered the premises and destroyed the machinery. Other buildings were entered at this place and in the neighbourhood, and the goods which they contained were cut to pieces and destroyed.—At Leversedge, in the neighbourhood of the moors which divide Lancashire from Yorkshire, an attack was made on the morning of the 12th of April by a body of two or three hundred armed men, on a valuable mill belonging to a Mr Cartwright. The proprietor, however, with the assistance of three of his servants and five soldiers, defended the place with courage, and the rioters, probably from the want of ammunition, were compelled to retire. Two of their number were left in the fields desperately wounded, and were secured, but soon afterwards died: neither of these persons would make any confession. The rioters, when retiring, expressed their determination to take Mr Cartwright's life at all hazards; and the people in the neighbourhood joined in expressing their regret that the former attempt had failed. A vast concourse of persons attended the funeral of one of the men who died of his wounds; and there was found written on the walls in many places, "Vengeance for the blood of the innocent." On the 18th of April, Mr Cartwright was twice shot at on the high road; shots were also fired at a constable and magistrate; and several attempts were made to assassinate General Campbell who commanded the troops at Leeds.—On the 9th of April, about 300 armed men attacked some mills near Wakefield, and destroyed the valuable machinery and property. They were seen some time before this on the road marching in regular sections, preceded by a mounted party with drawn swords, and followed by the same number mounted as a rear-guard. The inhabitants were intimidated; the watch and ward act could not be put in execution; the lower orders were to a man either abettors of, or participators in, these outrages.—The storehouse of arms for the local militia at Sheffield was surprised in the month of May, and the arms were destroyed and carried off.—In Yorkshire, the seizure of arms was carried to an alarming extent; and although the magistrates used their best efforts to discover the robbers, they failed almost in every instance.—In the district which

is bounded by the rivers Orr and Calder, nocturnal robberies of arms and ammunition, and nightly meetings of the rioters for the purposes of discipline, became very frequent; and in the whole of the disturbed villages the patroles found the people up at midnight, and heard frequent firing at short distances through the whole night.—It is singular that the districts in which the riots were carried to the greatest excess, were those in which the want of employment for the working manufacturers had been the least felt; and this circumstance, combined with the discipline and organization which the rioters seemed so anxious to acquire, left no doubt that their views extended to revolutionary measures of the most dangerous character. The system established could prosper only by an implicit obedience on the part of the rioters to their leaders; at the same time, there was no reason to believe that the disturbances were countenanced by persons of any rank in society, the leaders being men of the lowest order and the most desperate fortune. But the form which the associations assumed was alarming; a general secret committee had the superintendance of all the societies, each of which had its own secret committee for conducting the correspondence, and pursuing measures in concert with the societies established in other districts of the country. To ensure secrecy, an oath was administered to the initiated of the most detestable nature; an oath which bound him by the fear of assassination never to reveal any of the proceedings of his brethren; and which farther bound him to assassinate, or to pursue with the utmost vengeance, all persons who should be guilty of discovering their secret schemes. As this oath is of a very singular nature, it may be interesting to insert it. "I, *A. B.* of my own voluntary will, do declare and solemnly swear, that I never will reveal to any person or persons under the canopy of heaven, the names of the persons who compose this secret committee, their proceedings, meeting, places of abode, dress, features, connections, or any thing else that might lead to a discovery of the same, either by word or deed, or sign, under the penalty of being sent out of the world by the first brother who shall meet me, and my name and character blotted out of existence, and never to be remembered but with contempt and abhorrence; and I further now do swear, that I will use my best endeavours to punish by death any traitor or traitors, should any rise up amongst us, wherever I can find him or them, and though he should fly to the verge of nature, I will pursue him with unceasing vengeance. So help me G—d, and bless me to keep this my oath inviolable."

The military organization was, however, the most striking feature in the constitution of these societies. The rioters assembled in large numbers, in general by night, on heights or commons, which are numerous and extensive in some of the districts where the disturbances were most serious; they took the usual military precautions of patroles and countersigns; muster rolls were called over by numbers not by names; the leaders were generally in disguise; sentinels were placed to give alarm on the approach of any persons who might be suspected of a design to interrupt or give information of the proceedings; and, on the firing of a gun or other signal, the rioters instantly dispersed in such a manner as to avoid detection. The money which was, in many instances, obtained by contributions or plunder, served as a strong inducement to engage in the disturbances, while the horrid oath which was administered, the system of intimidation adopted, the destruction of houses and factories, the actual assas-

sinations committed, and the daring attempts made in other cases, gave a character of ferocity to these proceedings which had seldom been known in this country. And such were the daring and perseverance of these insurgents, that, although a great military force had been assembled in many districts; although the magistrates had zealously discharged their duty, even at the hazard of their lives, and the watch and ward act had in several places been put in force, every effort for a time proved unsuccessful to put down the disturbances. In such circumstances, the interference of the legislature was loudly called for; and whatever might have been the opinions entertained as to the causes of the riots, the protection of the innocent, and the security of the state, imperiously demanded the most vigorous and decisive measures.

A bill was accordingly introduced by Mr Secretary Ryder for the more exemplary punishment of frame-breakers. In support of this measure, it was stated, that at this time (about the middle of February) a system of riot had existed for three months; a system bordering on insurrection; and that, although it had been believed at first that the ordinary powers of the magistrates, and the accustomed punishments of the penal code, would have proved sufficient to check the disturbances, it had now become necessary to interfere, by adding to the terrors of the law. That the assistance of the military power had already been taken in Nottingham and the neighbourhood to an extent which had never been known on any former occasion; that even this, however, had been found insufficient; that active and intelligent magistrates had been sent down; rewards had been offered for the discovery of the offenders, and a special commission had been proposed with the view of bringing the rioters to a speedy trial. That government had thus exhausted all its ordinary resources for preserving the public tranquillity, and it now became necessary to think of measures of a different kind. That depredations had been carried on with a greater degree of secrecy and management than had before been known in similar proceedings; that this might, in some measure, be accounted for from the circumstance that the frames did not in general belong to those in whose possession they were found, and of course the persons who ought to have defended the property from the attacks of the rioters, being themselves operative weavers, had very often conceived that they had an interest in their destruction.—The riots, it was observed, had, in a great measure, arisen from the system of over-trading which became so general when South America was opened to British commerce; and this source having been soon exhausted, many workmen had been left unemployed.—The breaking of frames was already by law a minor felony punishable by transportation for fourteen years; but as this punishment had been found inadequate, it now became necessary to attach to the crime of frame-breaking a capital punishment. Although an increase in the number of capital punishments is in itself an evil, cases of necessity may occur when this lenient principle must be modified or departed from. If ever there was a case of such necessity, the present certainly was one; for, without expatiating on the great value of the property exposed to destruction, and the extraordinary temptations which bad men had to indulge the basest passions, under pretence of destroying the obnoxious machinery, the tranquillity of the state seemed to be involved in the result of the measure now proposed. A passage in the works of Sir Matthew Hale was referred to, that the policy of the bill

might have the support of so great a lawyer and so humane a man. Sir Matthew observes, "where offences grow enormous, frequent, and dangerous to the state; where they threaten to become destructive to society, and are likely to produce ruin among the inhabitants of a place, severe punishments, and even death itself, are sometimes necessary for the safety of the country." This description applied well to Nottingham, where no less than one thousand frames had already been broken, and the lives and properties of the inhabitants were at the mercy of a ferocious mob, who threatened destruction to all who opposed them. It was feared that the difficulty of detection might perhaps become greater when the severity of the punishment was thus increased; but this consideration was far less important than the chance that the crime might become less frequent. When a person reflects that he runs the risk of losing his life in gratifying his malice, he may be deterred from pursuing unlawful courses, even when the dread of transportation would not prevail.—As to the other clauses of the bill, which went to enforce the provisions of a law now obsolete, for establishing watch and ward throughout the counties, no hesitation could be entertained, since many enlightened persons, intimately acquainted with the state of the county of Nottingham, looked forward to such a measure the most effectual means of quieting the disturbances.—The evil was so enormous and pressing, that little time could be afforded for deliberation; and, at all events, this was not a case in which previous enquiry was demanded, since no difference of opinion existed as to the character and extent of the disturbances. That the measure now proposed was intended to be temporary, and that, although it might have been usual in ancient times to appoint a committee of enquiry before adding to the severity of the penal code, yet this formality might well be dispensed with at the present day, when there exists so free and extensive a communication with every district of the country, by means of which members had abundant opportunities of informing themselves as to the state of the disturbed counties. That so soon as it should be known that parliament had taken up the subject with so much solemnity, a great effect would be produced on the minds of those infatuated persons who were acting under the delusion of more designing individuals.—That no advantage could be derived from a committee to enquire into the causes of the disturbances; for, although it were proved that they had arisen from a decay of trade, could the committee open the continent, and restore the commerce of the nation to the same facilities which it had lately enjoyed?—That the measure proposed was founded on that leading principle of all criminal law, *pœna ad paucos, metus ad omnes perveniat*, the threat would have the effect of intimidating the many, and the punishment would fall only on the few. The bill had been brought forward not with a view to punish, but to prevent the crime; it had not for its object the shedding of human blood, but to render the commission of offences less frequent. When some persons talked of sporting with the lives of others, it might be asked, who sported with the lives of the people? who neglected the general safety? on whom must fall the awful responsibility if a remedy were not promptly applied to evils so alarming? If the law were openly defied, and force opposed to force, thousands must fall victims to the sentiments of a false humanity. That it was of no importance to enquire into the fact, whether the disturbances had been produced by dis-

tress among the workmen; if they had, that might be a good reason for a change in the general policy of the government, but could be no ground for opposing a temporary act, which was so loudly called for by the exigencies of the times.

But the interposition of parliament was required not by the distress of the workmen, but by a conspiracy against the machinery, which had regularly exhibited itself at all times when new machinery had been introduced. Penal statutes had thus been found necessary for the protection of every successive improvement in machinery. The severity of punishment must be adapted not to the enormity of the crime, but to the difficulty of preventing it;—That there are but two ways of legislating in criminal matters,—either by leaving the amount of punishment to the discretion of the judge, or by defining the different species of crime, and fixing separate punishments for each. That the latter mode would be found difficult, if not impossible, while the former is at once practicable and safe. That how sanguinary soever the language of the laws of England may be, their execution has always been mild. —It argued an ignorance of human nature to suppose that while detection was never absolutely impossible, men would not be more readily deterred from the commission of crimes, in proportion to the severity of the punishment attached to them. The punishment proposed by the bill would thus have a powerful effect in quelling the disturbances which disgraced the country.

It was maintained, on the other hand, that parliament ought to have some documents before it,—something which might appear on its records to justify so serious an interference as that which had been proposed; that a local bill should have been brought in, preceded by a petition from the magistrates; a committee should then have been appointed to enquire into the circumstances,—a course of proceeding which would have shewn the rioters that the eye of the legislature was on them, and manifested to posterity the grounds on which parliament had acted;—That the old laws for the punishment of the offence of frame-breaking had not yet been proved insufficient, since no convictions had hitherto taken place; and if the present measure were so pressing as it had been represented by ministers, why had they delayed so long to come to parliament to ask for a remedy? That so serious an alteration was not to be made in the whole police of the country without much deliberation;—that the punishment of death, so far from operating as a check on crimes, rather increases their number; and that it is a great reproach to the criminal law of this country that capital punishments are so frequently inflicted. How could it be expected that this bill should operate a salutary change on the rioters, among whom there prevailed such a degree of union, concert, and good faith towards one another, that not one of them had even yet been detected?—That the great object to be attained was the detection of the offenders; and that many other measures of a less alarming nature than the present, such as rendering the possessors of the frames responsible for their safety, and amercing the county in the value of those destroyed, would produce a degree of vigilance and perseverance which might afford a chance of putting down the conspiracy;—that the alarming extent to which the outrages had proceeded, must have arisen either from a conspiracy to suppress evidence against offenders, or supineness in the magistracy; and on either supposition the present measure would prove altogether ineffectual.—

That the legislature was in great danger of taking a wrong step at a moment when there existed so high a degree of indignation against persons who had committed violent aggressions on private property, and outrages on the public peace;—that the enactment of the penalty of death for the offence of frame-breaking, could not impress the rioters with a very strong sense of the horror which the legislature entertained for the crime, as they must know that by an act of the same legislature, stealing to the value of 40s. had long ago been declared a capital felony;—that the laws enacting severe punishments were unfortunately not the result of enlarged views or general principles, but sprung up one by one on some momentary alarm; that general principles, however, were more required in establishing capital punishments than in any other branch of legislation; and that if there were any measure which called for serious and solemn enquiry, it was that by which it was proposed that 10,000 of the people of this country should be rendered liable to the pains of death. It is true we have laws enacting death in similar cases, but these laws ought at once to be expunged from the statute-book if for this reason alone, that they are uniformly resorted to as precedents, when the indolence, the weakness, or the ignorance of the government lead it to increase the severity of the penal code. That the use which had been made of the military on this occasion was disgraceful to the government;—that the soldiers ought never to be employed except in extreme cases, and then they should be rendered useful rather by the terror of their appearance than by the actual exertion of their power; but in this instance they had been employed in a way most ruinous to their own discipline, and the least efficient for the purpose of checking the outrages. That the late excesses were not to be ascribed to the mildness of the punishment enacted by former laws, but to the failure of the magistrates to execute these laws. If the punishment of transportation for fourteen years be compared with the crime of breaking a frame, every man of common sense will declare it to be more than commensurate. The innovation now proposed was therefore unnecessary, cruel, and impolitic.—The bill proposed by the secretary of state was, however, carried through both houses of parliament, and received the royal assent.

The great engine of the operations of the rioters was the unlawful oath which they were accustomed to administer; and it became therefore a matter of the most serious importance to prevent those misguided persons from entering into a league so detestable. Mr Secretary Ryder brought in a bill for the purpose of declaring that the taking or administering of an oath, binding the party to the commission of a crime, should be deemed a capital felony. He proposed, however, to add this lenient provision,—that any person who should have taken such an oath, and should come forward before a charge was made against him, confess his guilt before a magistrate, and take the oath of allegiance, should be saved from the penalty of the act. This measure combined at once the severity which seemed indispensable to check the offence, with that tenderness for the lives of the people which is the best characteristic of a free government. Those who obstinately persisted in the commission of crimes which threatened the peace of society, were to be punished with the most unrelenting severity, while the deluded persons who had been led astray by the machinations of men more designing and more wicked than themselves, were to have an opportunity afforded them of making their peace with the

laws, and of satisfying the insulted authority of the state. The justification of this measure rested on the notorious fact as to the disturbed state of some populous counties, the difficulty which had been felt in suppressing the riots, the progress of the malcontents since the last measure for checking them had been adopted by the legislature, and the important truth, which was known not only to the government, but to every member of the legislature, that the system of organisation which had given that conspiracy its most alarming aspect, was derived chiefly, if not solely, from the administration of the oath taken by the conspirators. It had been suggested by some persons, that milder measures ought to have been tried before resorting to the punishment of death; but this was well answered by asking, whether the legislature should have proceeded with experiments from week to week, and from month to month, to see how much property might be destroyed, or how many persons assassinated? The information which government was daily receiving from all parts of the country of the increasing danger, precluded any delay for the trial of experiments which could not be made but by risking the lives of peaceable persons who had no protection for their property, no security from being murdered even on the highways, but in the vigorous interference of the legislature. That it was easy to talk of delay and enquiry in the House of Commons; but if gentlemen were living in the disturbed districts, and were daily or nightly threatened or attacked by a band of ruffians, they would soon be convinced that this was not a moment for procrastination. That it was right in this case to make the punishment for the conspiracy equal to that for the offence when actually committed, because something more than the crime of conspiracy alone was committed when a number of persons went from place to place administering, by compulsion, oaths which bound the individual taking them to perpetrate the most atrocious crimes, which could not be exceeded in malice or depravity, and which, indeed, scarcely fell short of high-treason. That the opinions disseminated by some persons who attributed the mischiefs complained of to ministers, might, at the present awful crisis, be attended with the most mischievous effects;—that the assertions thus made were wholly unfounded, and that in the districts where the riots were most serious, it had been discovered that those who had been most active were not in want of work, but were animated to their lawless proceedings by other motives than distress. That it was absurd to talk of the law proposed as offering an inducement to those who had already taken the oath to pursue their course of iniquity, since the act was not to have a retrospective operation; and contained, moreover, a clause of indemnity by which persons who should take the oath of allegiance might be secured. To those who maintained that the law was too sanguinary to have any good effect, it was answered, that experience had decided against their opinion,—that a measure somewhat similar, which had been adopted to prevent the seduction of soldiers from their allegiance, had been attended with the best consequences, although in that case only one individual had been apprehended two days after passing the act, and even, when capitally convicted, had been reprieved. The example, however, such as it was, put a stop to the commission of the offence; and there was every reason to believe that the same effect would follow the execution of the present measure.

A strong opposition was made to the bill. It was asserted that the

proposed law would violate every maxim of English jurisprudence,—that the intention to commit a crime, and the actual commission of it, had in all cases, except that of high-treason, been distinguished from each other; but it was now proposed to make the conspiring to commit a murder an offence of the same magnitude with the actual perpetration of that crime.—That by the law as it now stood, persons administering unlawful oaths were liable to seven years transportation, a sufficient punishment for the offence; but if the administering or taking the oath were to be pronounced a capital crime, the offender would naturally argue, that he might as well commit the crime which he had sworn to attempt, as refrain from it, since the punishment would in either case be the same. That the provision for exempting from punishment those who confessed their guilt, and consented to take the oath of allegiance, would be of no use, since the public could have very little security for the good conduct of such persons. It was the business of ministers, before proposing such a law as this, to have tried the effect of those already in existence; a special commission ought to have been sent down for trying the rioters, and when time had been allowed for ascertaining the effect of such measures, ministers, if they had found them ineffectual, might, with some propriety, have come forward with the present bill, which, so long as no experiment had been made, could not, with due regard to the principles of the constitution, be sanctioned by the legislature. That it was highly inexpedient to resort to the *ultimum supplicium* for slight offences; such a system of legislation renders it impossible to punish the highest crimes with that peculiar and marked severity which they deserve.—The measure, however, notwithstanding these objections, was considered indispensable to the safety of the country, and accordingly received the sarction of the legislature.

But still every thing which had been done was found ineffectual; the riots increased; the discipline and organisation of the insurgents assumed a more formidable aspect; the quantity of arms which they collected was every day becoming greater, and more vigorous measures still were imperiously demanded. Lord Castlereagh accordingly brought in a bill for the preservation of the public peace in the disturbed counties, and to give additional power to the justices for a limited time for that purpose. His lordship, on introducing this bill, expressed the deep regret of himself and his colleagues that they were once more compelled to apply to parliament to aid the executive with new powers for preserving the public tranquillity, as they had at one time earnestly hoped that by the ordinary course of law the disturbances might have been effectually put down. The delay in proposing the present law had originated in a great measure in the above considerations, and in the hopes which had been indulged that as several of the disturbed districts (the town of Nottingham in particular) had been restored to a state of comparative tranquillity, no farther measures would be required. But the disturbances had of late assumed a new character,—they more nearly resembled military associations; and a strong desire to get possession of arms had been manifested through the whole of the disturbed counties. The danger thus became more alarming; and the communications which had been lately received from the lieutenant of the west riding of Yorkshire, and several other magistrates, not only stated the further and alarming progress of the spirit of disaffection, but asserted that unless some additional powers were grant-

ed in aid of the law as it at present stood, they should find themselves unable to meet the difficulty;—that it was of more importance to look at the present aspect of the evil than at the causes which may have produced it;—that a temporary failure of employment, and the high price of provisions, had, in the first instance, united the mechanics against their masters, but on discovering their strength in this state of union, they had ventured to carry their projects much farther than they originally intended;—that they had at last assumed a military character so marked by conduct and deliberation, that it became impossible any longer to postpone measures of severity;—That the oath administered, and the purposes for which it was taken, proved that the conspiracy was of a most diabolical nature; and that although the committee which had been appointed to enquire into the state of the disturbed counties, had not thought it necessary to enter into a minute detail of the crimes committed, enough had been disclosed by them to justify an immediate interferance. That as to the existence and extent of the riots, no doubt could be entertained either by those who read the report of the committee, or even by persons who had access only to the ordinary sources of information.—That no addition should be sought to the power of the magistrates unless a case of necessity were made out; but that every man acquainted with the state of the disturbed counties, and the transactions which had lately taken place, agreed in opinion that the powers which the present laws gave the magistrates, were totally inadequate to the purpose of repressing the disturbances;—That a great military force had been sent down;—that the magistrates had done every thing in their power, but that even the military and civil authorities united, were, as the law stood, unable to act with that promptitude and vigour which the exigency required.—Government had thus done every thing in its power; and, in addition to the direct aid which it had afforded the peaceable inhabitants, it had given every encouragement to voluntary associations among themselves for the protection of their lives and property.—The law to be now proposed was to be limited to the disturbed counties; and in point of duration, was not to extend beyond the period at which it was probable parliament might be reassembled.—That there were three points which the new law ought particularly to embrace:—First, a more effectual provision to keep the rioters from possessing themselves of fire-arms; secondly, a suitable provision to guard against the effects of tumultuary meetings; thirdly, a clause to give more effectual power and more extensive jurisdiction to the magistrates of disturbed districts. That as it seemed to be the great object of the rioters to get possession of arms, the bill should provide, that the magistrates be allowed to make a search in suspected places, without previously taking a deposition on the subject, as they were now bound to do. As many well-disposed persons would chearfully have given up the arms in their possession but for the fear which they entertained of being visited with the vengeance of the rioters, the act should also give the magistrates the power of calling on the inhabitants to surrender the arms in their possession, receipts being given for the same; an exception, however, being made of those persons who might require arms for the defence of their property.—The next object was to disperse the rioters who might assemble for the purposes of training and discipline;—and there could be no doubt that as these bodies of men assumed the appearance of an army not under the controul of the ci-

vil power, it was the imperious duty of the legislature to provide for putting them down. But the magistrates, as the law stood, could only read the riot-act, and order them to disperse within an hour; and before that hour had expired, the rioters might probably have accomplished their purposes. It was of importance, therefore, that the bill should enable the magistrates instantly to disperse all dangerous assemblies held either by night or by day; to arrest those who might refuse to give obedience, and to bring them to trial at the next quarter sessions for a misdemeanour.—The next point for consideration was, the limited jurisdiction of the magistrates; for, as the law stood, the insurgents could, by stepping from one county to another, defeat the ends of justice; it would be proper, therefore, to bestow on the magistrates of the adjacent counties, a concurrent jurisdiction.—The proceedings of the rioters would thus be met in all the different shapes which they might assume, and the deluded persons who had engaged in this atrocious conspiracy, and who might otherwise be deterred from violating their unlawful engagements, might return to a sense of duty when they found themselves thus protected by the legislature.

Such was the exposition of the state of the country, and of the nature of the measures proposed, which was given by Lord Castlereagh. In the course of the debate, Mr Wilberforce spoke with contempt of the declamations which had been poured forth as to the causes of the riots, which, of course, in the opinion of some persons, were to be sought only in the conduct of the administration, and in the commercial distress which their measures had occasioned. Mr Wilberforce declared, that the disease was in his opinion of a political nature; and wished it were possible for him to believe that the disorder was owing to temporary or accidental causes. It was true, said he, that the state of the country, from the high price of provisions, and the want of employment for labour, was such as to increase the discontents. Under such circumstances, popular disorders must always increase; they grow up and flourish in a rank soil; but the diseases, for which a remedy was now demanded, arose from causes of a more general nature. They might be ascribed to the efforts made in certain mischievous publications, calculated to alienate the affections of the people from the laws and government of the country, and to stir them up to measures injurious to the community, and ruinous to themselves.—Mr Canning, who had been a member of the committee, upon whose report the bill was founded, declared his concurrence in the sentiments of Mr Wilberforce; expressed his opinion, that the report rather underrated than exaggerated the extent of the disturbances, and intimated, that he would have proposed still stronger measures than those to which the government had thought fit to resort, had it not been for the pledge given by ministers, that if other measures should be found necessary, parliament should be reassembled without delay.—Sir Francis Burdett treated with ridicule the opinion delivered by Mr Wilberforce respecting the abuses of the liberty of the press, and the dangerous nature of the publications which had been circulated in the country; and expatiated at great length on the perils to which the ruffians, who had already perpetrated every sort of crime, were to be exposed by the measure under consideration. Mr Canning made some excellent observations on this subject. "The honourable baronet had said, that if the root of all those evils lay in the press and free discussion, there could be no remedy but stopping the press

and free discussion altogether. Now he had imagined that there was no principle upon which people were more perfectly agreed, than that it was often necessary to compromise among evils, in order to produce the greatest good. The liberty of the press and of free discussion should certainly be fostered and encouraged by every wise government, as the sources from which the greatest benefits to mankind flow. But, at the same time, if they were pushed to an extreme by bad men, from wicked motives, the law had power to correct the evils which might be derived from this perversion of a principle from which the greatest good ought to be expected. As to the sympathy which might be felt by some for the individuals who suffered for their conduct in the recent disturbances—if the attention were exclusively directed to the individual at the moment he was expiating his crime, and not at the time of his committing it, hard indeed must be the materials of his heart who would not allow the contemplation of such a wretch's sufferings to efface for a moment the recollection of his guilt; but the measures proposed were not for the purpose of punishing, but for the purpose of saving. It was to save the great mass of the community from the evils produced by those disturbances; it was to save even the great mass of the poor deluded people themselves, that those measures were proposed. The evidence proved, that arms had been stolen, and that men were seen drilling at nights. Now, although it was not proved that the men so drilled were armed with the arms so stolen, yet there could be very little doubt, that in time those arms would come into their hands. It could hardly be supposed, that two such operations should be going on in precisely the same part of the country, and yet that it was never intended the arms and the rioters should meet together. Upon the whole, he was prepared to approve of the measures which were proposed; and he expressed his hope that they would be found sufficient for the purpose."

The arguments which were urged against the bill may be understood from the following summary:—That the supporters of the bill had looked merely to the surface of the evil—that they wished to explain to the House only the present state of the disturbed counties, without affording any information as to the causes of so unexampled a conspiracy—that there was no occasion for the precipitation with which it was intended to carry through the present measure, since it was known that for some time past the riots had neither increased in extent nor violence—that the report which had been laid before the House was, from the want of parole evidence, quite unsatisfactory, and by no means such as to warrant the serious innovations on the law and constitution which were contemplated—that no such thing existed as a disciplined army in the disturbed counties—that not a regiment, not even a company, such as the ministers described, could be found in any part of the country—that the whole of the distress in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire, originated in the impolicy of government, which had annihilated the commerce of the country—that no appearance of combination existed among the rioters—that, on the contrary, they were all disunited, and without any appearance of a settled purpose—that no projects were entertained against the constituted authorities or the government—that the controversy existed entirely betwixt the workmen and their masters—that at Nottingham, by the ordinary operation of the

law, the riots had been entirely quelled, and, by the same means, order and tranquillity might easily be restored in the other districts—that the most guilty had already expiated their offences on the scaffold, and that the combination being thus dissolved by the death of their leaders, no serious apprehension could be entertained—That no attempt had been made to execute the existing laws—that evidence had been produced before the committee, to shew that the watch and ward act had not been complied with, and that there was no proof of that accumulation of arms, which the rioters were supposed to have accomplished by violence and robbery—That a great deal had been said of a meeting on Dane-moor on the night of the 19th of April, immediately before the burning of the mills; but of the forty persons who were present on the moor, it appeared that ten were local militiamen disguised, who had thus been employed by government in a most detestable system of espionage—That the misguided insurgents had been frequently induced to go greater lengths than they would otherwise have gone, by men who were employed as spies, to incite the multitude to daring and desperate acts of violence—That the measures now proposed to parliament resembled very much those which had been some years ago adopted in Ireland; in that country, in which such dreadful scenes had been exhibited, that the recollection of them agonized the minds of Englishmen—That under pretence of searching for arms, government wished to disarm the country—that the persons whose arms were demanded might very well say, "We will not give up our arms, for if we do the rioters will mark us out, and we shall be unable to defend ourselves"—that when the minds of men were so much distracted with terror and apprehension, as in the present instance, and all the powers of a despotic government were demanded, it was impossible to say what consequences might be produced. That there was no evidence to prove the rioters were in possession of any considerable funds—that, on the contrary, they seemed to be absolutely destitute of money, and felt the utmost difficulty in collecting the most trifling sums—that the revocation of the orders in council alone would ensure the restoration of tranquillity, and, added to the blessings of a good harvest, would speedily relieve the distresses of the country.

Mr Whitbread made an elaborate harangue on this occasion, and concluded by proposing his usual remedy. "There is but one remedy," said he, "for all these evils, which must unavoidably be borne so long as peace shall not be obtained. But peace ought by all means to be obtained if possible, for the country is going progressively into a state of things from which much is to be feared. The ministers must be aware of the truth of what he was stating, as he had predicted, that if peace was not made in time, we should be compelled to make it whether we would or not. Peace is the only remedy," said he, "for our internal grievances, and the only remedy for our external grievances also; and, in his opinion, a more favourable occasion for a general peace never existed than at this time." Mr Whitbread was unconsciously palliating, in some measure, atrocities which filled the country with horror—he was helping to turn the indignation of the people, which was naturally directed against the enemies of their country, towards that government which protected them while it upheld the honour of the English name; and indirectly encouraging in

their nefarious proceedings the deluded men who were endeavouring to reduce the country to an extremity, which might have compelled it to accept the ungenerous advice which he was always ready to offer. But, happily for the honour and prosperity of England, his advice was rejected; the measures proposed by government for restoring the tranquillity of the country were sanctioned by the legislature, and were instantly attended with the most beneficial consequences.

CHAP. V.

State of Parties at the Beginning of the Year. The Prince Regent's Letter to the Duke of York. Lord Borringdon's Motion for an Address to the Prince to form a more extended Administration. The Ministers retain their Places. Assassination of Mr Perceval; his Character.

THE character and views of the different parties who possess or aspire to the direction of public affairs, acquire an importance in a free country, which excites the astonishment and ridicule of those who live under a different form of government. It is not difficult to assign the cause of this marked distinction. The proceedings of an arbitrary government have but little interest to an enlightened mind—for as the will of the sovereign, which forms the only law, is seldom guided by principles which can become the ground-work of reasoning, the domestic revolutions to which such governments are exposed, constitute a barren and uninteresting subject of history. Extreme simplicity and endless variety alike exclude conjecture and speculation; the powers of the understanding find their proper employment in the extensive regions which lie between, in which the mind is neither stupified by a tedious uniformity, nor bewildered by a succession of changes which defy all the laws of arrangement and combination. All free governments, and, in a peculiar and eminent degree, the government of this country, exhibit this happy moderation so propitious to study and reflection. The constitution, although intricate, is not embarrassed by unnecessary complications; it is composed of many powers, each acting as a check on the other; and, above all, the people are accustomed to exercise a great controul over the proceedings of government. Nothing, therefore, of any consequence is done here, no important step, either in foreign or domestic policy, is resolved on, without ample and eager discussion; and no real change can be accomplished for which some plausible reason is not offered. It is true, indeed, that such a government, although liable to continual fluctuations, changes its principles but little in the course of time; and that, although minor alterations are of frequent occurrence, and the public mind is continually agitated with political discussion, yet all the changes which can be ultimately effected by any party, how powerful soever, are confined within narrow limits. Yet the character and views of public men rise in importance in exact proportion to the real security of the constitution against their influence and designs: the popular interest in their proceedings is commensurate to the stability of the institutions of which it is the surest guarantee; so that there is no branch

of the history of a free country which so naturally and universally engages attention as those great contests for power and pre-eminence, which ignorance and malice alone are wont to brand as the mere struggles of faction.

It has been supposed by some persons, that the leading public men in a free state are necessarily and inevitably guided by selfish considerations—that they are disposed to view the politics, whether domestic or foreign, of their country, chiefly as they may affect the interest of the factions which are struggling for power, and that the semblance, rather than the reality, of patriotism is all that can be expected from them. Were their power greater, or their independence of public opinion more complete, it has been imagined that they would more easily disencumber themselves of the selfish maxims by which their conduct is enslaved, and that, although with occasional frowardness and tyranny, yet with greater boldness and vigour, they would seek the real interest of the country. This, however, seems to be a mistake; for, besides that the blessings of freedom have a tendency to inspire public men with greater nobleness and generosity of mind, the check which, in a free country, is exercised through the medium of the press, and by the vigilance of the people, on the conduct of their leaders, must be infinitely more powerful in insuring the high and honourable fulfilment of duty, than the possession of the most absolute power of which history has left any record. Notwithstanding the calumnies which have been so industriously circulated by persons who wish to bring not only the government, but all public men into contempt, it may be affirmed, that in no age or country has there ever been a race of statesmen of more eminent qualifications, and more unimpeachable integrity, than has flourished in Great Britain for the last century. The pride and arrogance of some, the weakness and obstinacy of others, may have deserved censure; but there is not the slightest reason to believe that any considerable man belonging to either of the great leading parties, has, for many years past, been tempted by the pitiful emoluments of office, or by any consideration merely selfish, to sacrifice his integrity or independence. Men who, as individuals, would be wicked enough to make such a sacrifice, could never in a public capacity be expected to sustain the honour of the nation: yet it is a fact, which few will venture to dispute, that how great soever the errors in policy which may have been imputable to ministers, the national honour and good-faith have hitherto been preserved without tarnish or reproach. This is a proof, at least, of honourable views in those who have been entrusted with the conduct of affairs—of principles which would in vain be sought for among the degraded victims of a base and sordid ambition.

A great change is supposed to have taken place in the state of parties since the death of Pitt and Fox, who had so far elevated themselves by their talents above their contemporaries. No person, it is said, now follows either party with that implicit submission which he was wont to pay to the tenets of the one or other of these great leaders; but this opinion also seems to be founded on a very obvious mistake. The mere admiration of talents is not sufficient to insure political attachment; it goes a great way indeed towards preserving personal regard and veneration for the possessor, but in a matter so serious as the choice of a system of political opinions, it will not maintain that united and vigorous cooperation which is necessary to the power and influence of a party. No man ever stood higher in the public estimation for talents and virtue than

the late Mr Burke; yet he could hardly be said at any period of his life to have commanded a party, or to have insured for his opinions implicit respect or active co-operation. Political attachments in honourable minds arise out of a candid and rational preference for a system of opinions, by which it is supposed that the public safety and honour can be best maintained; uninfluenced by personal regard or affection, they are founded on views far more generous and elevated. As a proof of this, we may refer to the career of those eminent men who have lately brought the public affairs to so glorious an issue. They became the leaders of that party of which Mr Pitt was at one time the head; and they have been uniformly supported with no less zeal and union both in and out of parliament, than that illustrious statesman himself. There have been more numerous defections indeed from the whig, or opposition party; and it is not difficult to give a satisfactory explanation of this circumstance, without supposing that the genuine followers of that party are defective in a sincere and steady attachment to its principles. It is natural for political adventurers, in the first instance, to engage on the side of opposition; they have there a better field for the display of those qualities on which they value themselves,—a zealous, though narrow, hostility to existing institutions, and a clamorous impatience of all control. But, as such persons are not in general very steady to their principles, and as they are easily seduced by the popular applause, which their arts seldom fail to obtain, they quickly separate themselves from those with whom they were at first accustomed to act, and by an affectation of greater purity and warmer zeal for the public service than either of the great parties possess, they strive to acquire the confidence of the lower orders. It has thus happened, that, besides the ministerial and opposition parties, another tribe of politicians, of a singular and anomalous character, has made its appearance; and as the two great parties in all their struggles sought the approbation of the higher and more intelligent orders, this new faction seized on the mob as the proper objects of its influence and authority. At the beginning of the present year, there were in this way three parties contending for influence, of which it may be proper in this place to give some account,

The ministerial party, of which the late Mr Perceval was at this time the leader, numbered among its supporters many very able men. Its chiefs unanimously concurred in a profound reverence for the principles and opinions of Mr Pitt, in whose school they were bred, and to whose memory they looked with feelings of veneration. It can scarcely be necessary to give any account of the political principles of this great man; they are known to all Europe, and exercised on its destinies for the last thirty years a greater influence than those of any other statesman. The leading maxims of his followers were persevering resistance to the dangerous ambition of France—a wise jealousy of the principles which have been drawn forth in the course of her revolution, and a firm determination in all circumstances to sustain the high rank of Great Britain in the scale of European powers. The principles of their foreign policy, therefore, were vigorous as they were simple; and with regard to domestic affairs, the constant tenor of their conduct proved that although they were favourable to moderate and practical improvement, they entertained a salutary dread of intemperate innovation. They considered the mechanism of such a government as that of England to be a great deal too fine to be

touched with impunity by the rash hand of reform; and they perceived, in the circumstances of modern times, and in the change which had taken place in the habits and intelligence of the people of Europe, the symptoms of a dangerous empiricism, which it was the great object of their policy to counteract and repress. They might be called timid in comparison with some of their opponents, but they were timid only as they were sagacious; and the energy which they displayed in resisting the violence by which every thing sacred in the country was at one time attacked, first saved England from revolution, and, in the issue, raised her to the highest pitch of greatness. If they were mistrustful of the sweeping conclusions which were drawn by weak and ardent minds, from abstract and metaphysical principles, their caution was inspired by the dictates of genuine philosophy; and if they were exposed to the reproach of timidity, they could provoke it from those misguided spirits alone who might have cast the same imputation on the greatest philosopers of modern times,—men, who, rejecting idle and vain theories, have, on the basis of experiment, established the beautiful superstructure of true science. They were no less sensible than their enemies to the difficulties under which the country laboured, and the dangers to which it was exposed; but they considered these dangers as the result of accidents which could not be controlled, and of a state of the world which nothing but the full display of all the energies of England could correct or reform. Hence, regardless of difficulties, they persevered with manly firmness in a contest, from which Great Britain could not have retired without dishonour; hence they sustained that high tone which she has always been accustomed to hold among the nations of the world; and hence they not only maintained her honour and integrity, but were enabled, in the issue, to add prodigiously to her ancient stock of glory.

It has been remarked by philosophers, that the distinctions which exist among practical politicians, are rather nominal than real, and that with very slight sacrifices on each side, intelligent men might easily be brought to a good understanding,—they would be called upon to give up, not principles, but expressions; and while they would thus exhibit more philosophical precision in defining their views, they would contribute much to tranquillize society, which is so often convulsed by their controversies. The principle on which this observation is founded has been singularly exemplified in English history. The ancient distinctions which divided the different parties of English politicians, have no longer a meaning,—those who are now described as Whigs and Tories, no longer profess the sentiments by which their respective parties were formerly distinguished.—The leading principles of those great men, by whom the revolution of 1688 was accomplished, and of their immediate successors, whose measures cast such a lustre around the country, are precisely those on which the ministers of the present day have invariably acted,—a firm resistance to the ambition of France, and a jealousy of the tenets of the Roman Catholics.—Their opponents, who still claim for themselves the appellation of Whigs, have not only abandoned the great and salutary principles formerly entertained on these points, but have avowed, as the leading maxims of their creed, opinions of an opposite nature.—They demand unqualified concession to the catholics of Ireland, and have in a thousand instances called on the country to make peace with France, in circumstances which the whigs of the reigns of King

William and Queen Anne would have considered as imperiously demanding the vigorous prosecution of war. He who should turn to the political writings of Addison, and the other great whig authors of his age, would suppose that he is reading an elegant exposition of the creed of the present ministers, and a satire on the tenets of their opponents. Surely the distinctions by which public men are divided must be altogether nominal and insignificant, or the whigs and tories of the present day must have committed an outrage on the language, in assuming the appellations by which they are distinguished.

The laudable activity with which the present ministers conducted their measures of foreign policy, and the contrast, in this respect, which their conduct presented to that of their predecessors, formed a striking feature in their public character. And as it has been generally acknowledged, that emergencies arose, in which it was not possible for Great Britain to exert herself too much,—in which her honour and interest alike demanded that every nerve should be strained; as it is not denied that the line of conduct pursued by ministers was that which sustained the character of England as the bulwark of liberty, and the rallying point for the independence of Europe; as it will no longer be disputed that they have acquired honour by the steady support of the noble struggle maintained in the peninsula, and that they persevered in supporting this cause under difficulties and discouragements of all kinds; it is not easy to perceive with what justice their activity can be described as feverish, or their efforts, which led to such glorious consequences, can be undervalued.

Mr Perceval was at the head of the administration, which was composed of many members, whose experience and talents were well known to the country.—The unfortunate differences which occurred betwixt Lord Castlereagh and Mr Canning, had deprived the government of the assistance of these eminent men: but in their place the Marquis Wellesley, a statesman of great and undoubted talents, was for a time substituted.—Whether the accession of strength which the ministers thus acquired, was a full compensation for the loss sustained by the resignations of Lord Castlereagh and Mr Canning, is more than questionable. Great indeed must the talents of that man have been, who could compensate the loss of the various and distinguished qualifications of the eminent statesmen who had unfortunately retired from office.—Acting, however, on the same principles which had guided the conduct of Mr Pitt when out of power, Lord Castlereagh and Mr Canning, on leaving the ministry, never thought of joining the ranks of opposition; but, sincere and ardent in the cause of their country, they flung away every selfish consideration, and proved to the world, that a change in their own personal condition could make no alteration in their principles.

The Marquis Wellesley was about this time a very great favourite with the public; and is thought by some to have obtained credit for a larger portion of talent than he actually possessed. As a war minister, and in planning and conducting military operations, he was believed to be not only superior to all his contemporaries, but to stand absolutely alone. In determining the mode and the places in which the war might be most successfully carried on, in suiting the magnitude of an expedition to its object, and in appointing the persons best qualified to command, Lord Wellesley was said to have no rival in any living statesman. He was supposed to be the only master of this

science, apparently so simple; to be the only minister who had discovered and could act upon the obvious truth, that no interest which a ministry can derive from the choice of an inefficient person, can counterbalance the loss of credit consequent on the failure of a great enterprise. Many very improper appointments had taken place of late years; but under the auspices of the Wellesleys, a new system had been established; means had been suited to their ends; effective employments had been ably filled; and a plan of operations adopted, in which enterprise and caution were happily combined. The services of this nobleman were for these reasons considered at this time as of the utmost importance; and it was believed that any administration of which he was a member, would, for that single reason, be better than any other.—Such was the opinion entertained of him by his admirers; but there were others who took a very different view of his character, and ventured to predict that he would never obtain considerable influence in the British councils. He seemed deficient in a talent for debate, without which no statesman can rise to a very high rank in this country; and it was generally understood, that he considered the business of leading in a popular assembly as an intolerable drudgery. It suited him better, said his enemies, to issue his mandates from the recesses of oriental pomp, than to force them through the clamorous and obstinate resistance of a British opposition. He thus renounced the only practicable means of acquiring consideration; the pride and splendour which dazzled the East, were of no estimation in the eyes of republican London; and it is not surprising, therefore, that he sunk into subordinate stations in the cabinet. With regard to its interior arrangements also, he was said to labour under disadvantages. In consequence of a long residence abroad, he had not attached to himself any body of statesmen; he either wanted or disdained to use that dexterity and address by which the minds of men are managed and conciliated, and he was thus induced to form the resolution of withdrawing himself entirely from the cabinet. Whether there be any justice in these reflections on the character of this eminent personage we shall not pretend to determine, but it seems impossible any longer to doubt, that in the estimate of his superiority over other statesmen, an important error was committed; and that the ministerial party, even after his secession, still embraced a portion of talent, which was amply sufficient for the conduct either of war or negociation.

Such was the state of the ministerial party at the beginning of the year.—Their regular opponents, who had, not many years ago, made pretensions so high to talents and integrity, had of late fallen very much in the public estimation. They had been tried as ministers, and had failed; and the disappointment of the public was of course proportioned to the expectations which had been so imprudently raised. Many candid and impartial men who have given them credit for great talents, have confessed at the same time that there was a want of union among them; a want of some acknowledged chief to give an impulse to the whole. They have admitted, that the selection of persons who were appointed to fill the two most important departments, those of finance and of war, were highly injudicious; that the promotion of Lord Henry Petty, as the successor of Pitt, was imprudent; that the plans of taxation which were proposed by this youthful financier, consisted of some poor expedients rashly adopted, and as hastily abandoned. As to the military operations, there

existed but one opinion; the expeditions to the Dardanelles, to Alexandria, and to the Rio de la Plata, exhibited great errors, both in the plan and in the execution. The British armies under the present ministers have sometimes fought with disaster, seldom without glory; while under their predecessors defeat was aggravated by disgrace, and the army was humbled before those who had not been numbered among the military nations of Europe.—The extraordinary coalition which took place betwixt Mr Fox and Lord Grenville filled the nation with astonishment; but the feelings of the people were roused into resentment, when it was found that the administration not only failed to conduct the war with vigour, but, with the sacrifice of all its former principles, refused to sanction the improvements in domestic policy, by the promise of which they had acquired a share of popular favour. Loud complaints were raised, that their efforts to provide for their adherents were on a larger scale, and at a greater expence to the public resources, than those even of their political opponents, which they had so warmly reprobated. This marked inconsistency betwixt their conduct and professions had the effect of inspiring the people with a suspicion and distrust of public men; and the whig administration may be said to have shaken the confidence of the country in its rulers, and to have given a blow to the credit and popularity of all statesmen, which it will require the best exertions of their successors to repair. The whig leaders themselves made no effort of this kind; but, affecting a sort of sullen dignity, they failed to gain the confidence either of the sovereign or the people. Such was the state of the whig party, when an attempt was made by the Prince Regent to unite their leaders with the administration; but before proceeding to give an account of this transaction, some notice must be taken of a party which has of late become conspicuous both in and out of parliament.

It has been imagined by some, that the existence of what is called a popular or country party, of a party which systematically seeks to maintain, and even to extend the rights of the people, and to restrain or diminish the authority of the crown, is essential to the integrity of the British constitution. In support of this opinion, they refer to the history of the country party, which makes so great a figure in the annals of England; and they imagine, that the popular party of the present day is held together by the same spirit under a different form. That the popular spirit ought at all times to be represented in the House of Commons, it were absurd to deny; but no person who reflects on the character of the country party, as it was formerly constituted, will compare it in any point of view to the popular faction of these times. The country-party was composed of a large proportion of the landed aristocracy, united to the wealth and influence of the people; the object of this union was the protection of the state against the dangerous incroachments of the crown; but the popular party of the present day boasts of little rank or wealth or talents, and instead of being combined to oppose the influence of the crown, seems destined, in so far as its feebleness will permit, to overturn the constitution. For some time past, the democratic party has thrown off all dependence on that portion of the aristocracy which supported its pretensions. Their leaders have endeavoured to raise the standard of the people against the House of Commons; and, supported by popular applause, have set all parties alike at defiance. Such a party as this can never be essential to the integrity of

the British constitution; it has no connection with any of the legitimate powers of this form of government; but is calculated to diffuse among the people a spirit of distrust and hostility towards the lawful authorities of the state. The truth of this proposition will appear by a reference to the history of democratic extravagances. The recollection of the turbulent scenes produced by the politics of Mr Wilkes perished with himself; the nation enjoyed a season of tranquillity till the breaking out of the French revolution, and it was only when this dangerous stimulus was applied to the public mind, that popular sentiments were once more revived. But the danger and folly of such sentiments were soon discovered; the nation became tired of pernicious extravagances, which had no longer the gloss of novelty to recommend them, and a prudent distrust of innovation succeeded to the wild enthusiasm of a moment. The rare appearance of popular or revolutionary principles is of itself a proof, that, so far from being congenial to the British constitution, they are of the nature of a disease which periodically affects the soundest bodies; and it is a happy circumstance for England, that how violent soever the occasional effervescences of this wild spirit may have been, the great body of the people remain unaffected by so melancholy a distemper.

Complaints have been made of the turn which the French revolution gave to the politics of the leading men of this country, and many persons have maintained, that the system of restraint which sprung up in the first moments of alarm, was carried beyond all reasonable bounds. Every thing, say they, bordering on innovation was proscribed; the very name of liberty was held in abhorrence, and the slightest censure of the measures of government was branded as a symptom of revolutionary licence. But they forget, that, to counteract the symptoms of political disease, it becomes indispensable to carry restraint and punishment a great deal beyond the ordinary measure of severity, and that, without destroying the credit of revolutionary principles among the more intelligent orders of society, it would have been impossible to put down a spirit so formidable and daring. When that great man, who presided over the affairs of England when the mania of the French revolution was about extending itself to this country, adopted those painful but wholesome measures of severity, he was aware, that he could not otherwise restrain and extinguish a spirit, which threatened the very existence of the government He had recourse, therefore, to the only measures which were suited to the occasion; and as he knew well that the maxims of liberty would be ever in the mouths of those who intended to pervert them to bad purposes, he hesitated not to put down sedition, at the hazard even of being accused as an enemy to freedom. He wished to resist the danger which was most imminent; he saw that the spirit of revolution was that danger; and, as he was well aware that the liberties of the country were too firmly established to receive any very violent shock, even from the most severe temporary measures, he resolved on securing what was most in hazard, the legitimate and practicable freedom of the British constitution. But the measures which he adopted, although the country unquestionably owed her salvation to them, were not unattended with many serious evils; the policy of the war in which he had engaged was justified on principles which the vulgar could not always comprehend; while the progress of hostilities entailed a weight of taxation which no nation in any age had hitherto endured. The commercial prospe-

rity of the empire was at last interrupted by the extraordinary exertions of an enemy who commanded nearly the whole of the European continent. When the people suffer, it matters little who are to blame; their resentment vents itself indiscriminately on those who are within their reach; and the rulers of the country are made responsible for all the evils which occur during their administration. The popular spirit thus revived, and found its appropriate nourishment amid the distresses of the country. Out of the disappointment of those fond hopes, which the people had indulged on the accession of the whig party to power, that spirit arose which affected to despise the whole race of statesmen; which proclaimed that the axe must be laid to the root of the tree, and that without some radical change, the nature of which no one could explain, the nation was undone. Of this disposition, the leaders of the popular party were in readiness to profit, and out of the inevitable distress to which the country was exposed, arose a disease which must ere this have attracted the notice of government, but for the perfect reliance which it has been enabled to place in its own strength and stability. To believe, however, that a party growing out of accidental circumstances, and wholly unconnected with any of the legitimate powers of the state, destined in good times to amuse by its eccentricities, and powerful only in a season of distress and confusion, can be essential to the British constitution, is to give way to a very unaccountable delusion.

The modern spirit of democracy appears to manifest disadvantage, when contrasted with that admirable constitution of government which has been found so well suited to the management of great affairs, and seems contemptible when compared even with the revolutionary genius, which has at different times disturbed the repose of the world. With all the horrors of the French revolution, there was something noble and generous in its frenzy, which is not to be found in the patriotism of the popular leaders of this country. The spirit of revolution is naturally connected with bold and extensive views of legislation,—combined with an enthusiastic zeal for science,—and indulging even romantic speculations concerning the progress and improvement of the human mind. But there is nothing lofty in this modern patriotism, no science, no philosophy, no disinterested zeal for the general welfare. It has been well observed, that it seeks merely to gratify the lowest passions of the multitude, the love of scandal, and the love of money; of scandal, which is to discredit all those who hold any place in the administration, or have any influence in the national councils, and of economy, which discovers the salvation of the country in the abolition of a few sinecures. It is a fundamental principle with its leaders, that all public men are profligate, and all are equally so; that all public measures are alike ruinous, and that the national good is equally disregarded in the cabinet and in the senate. To a vulgar mind scandal is always welcome; abuse of the great is to many readers the most pleasing entertainment, and no composition is so palatable as that which is well seasoned with this ingredient. In amusing themselves at the expence of persons in high stations, they rise in their own estimation; they seem to become greater men than those whom they affect to treat with contempt. The influence of this spirit on the characters of public men cannot be concealed; for if a minister is certain, that, whatever be his conduct, it will be equally reprobated by the popular leaders, the dread of their censure ceases to be a check on him. What

ever his measures may be, the result is still the same; and nothing remains for him but to follow his own plans, and to treat with indifference their reproaches. All the benefits of a fair and impartial scrutiny into the conduct of statesmen are thus sacrificed to intemperance and folly.

Another tenet, (it has been remarked) inculcated by this class of politicians is, that no instruction is necessary to enable any one to form an opinion upon public affairs. The capacity for doing this is represented as a mere matter of common sense, demanding no depth of reflection, no cultivation of mind, and no philosophical habits. The crude discussions of the blacksmith's shop and the alehouse are reckoned quite sufficient to solve the most intricate problems in political economy. It is easy to see how convenient and suitable such a doctrine must be to the readers, and to the writers also, of such productions; yet of all those maintained by this sect, none are more erroneous and pernicious. There is no science whatever, in which first appearances are so deceitful as in that of politics. No one, perhaps, presents objects so extensive, so various, so little to be comprehended by one glance of the understanding. As it is the favourite system of nature, in all her grand operations, to extract good out of evil, so the ultimate and lasting effects of any measure are often directly opposite to those which are immediate and apparent. Those, therefore, who are capable of discriminating only what is directly before their eyes, must, on many occasions, be infallibly in the wrong. Until politics be considered as a science, and philosophical principles be applied to them, no one can hope, with any certainty, for the attainment of truth.

Their writers are no less distinguished by a violent outcry against taxation, and a perpetual clamour for its reduction. They make the immediate saving of money, not only a great, but the sole criterion of the merits of administration; they make patriotism dwindle into parsimony. Yet, in the eye of the enlightened politician, honour, ultimate security, public order, the power even of giving aid to suffering neighbours, hold a still higher rank The authors alluded to confine themselves, besides, to vague charges of embezzlement, and clamours for radical reform, without examining and fixing upon those points which would truly admit of amendment. Errors and inequalities prevail in the British system of taxation to a less extent perhaps than in any other; but they are still considerable; and he who, scrutinizing every arrangement according to sound principles of political economy, should point out and press them upon the attention of the legislature, would do a real and great service. Little, however, can be done by mere loose and vague generalities, and by calling for violent measures, which could not perhaps, and certainly would not, be adopted.

But we must now close this rapid sketch of the general character of the different parties, and hasten to relate the momentous transactions in which they were engaged in the course of the present year.

In the choice which was to be made of ministers on the expiration of the restrictions, a very deep interest was of course felt by the great parties into which the country is divided. The political attachments of his royal highness the Prince Regent, had in early life connected him with the leaders of the opposition; and it was supposed, that on assuming the sovereign authority, and when left at liberty to act according to his own opinions, he would of course be guided by the predilections of his youth. When he

was first called to the regency, under the restrictions which the legislature thought it expedient to impose, he seemed still to retain the attachments which he had indicated in a different condition; and the early friends of his royal highness had little doubt that they would be called to the management of public affairs so soon as the prince might feel himself entitled to act freely, and for himself, in the choice of his ministers.—Before the prince was called on to discharge the functions of the sovereign, he was perhaps but little acquainted with the principles of the men who had guided the councils of his father; and as he probably derived from their enemies any knowledge which he had of them, it can excite little surprise that he should have formed no very accurate estimate of their characters. When he was first nominated to the regency, therefore, he discovered some dislike towards his councillors, whom he retained only from the most generous and laudable motives; but on a nearer acquaintance with them, and (it may be fairly presumed) on a more accurate knowledge of the merits and pretensions of the different parties, he was led to change his opinion. When called to the exercise of the sovereign authority, and to a more serious consideration of the politics of the country, he discovered that the men in whom his father had reposed confidence, acted on principles which were best calculated to secure the honour and safety of the empire. Even if it were becoming, therefore, to bring any charge against his royal highness, who in the capacity of sovereign is not constitutionally responsible for his actions, it surely would be no reproach to say of him, that he changed his sentiments on mature reflection. If the change was honourable and sincere, about which there can be no doubt; if he preferred the ministers of his father, because he was convinced that they were best qualified to serve the country, his conduct must demand the warmest approbation. Acting upon the most honourable and enlightened views, and influenced by the experience which he had acquired during the restricted regency of the character and talents of his minister, he determined not to sacrifice the country to any system of favouritism. He found that under the ministers of his father's choice, events had occurred which threw around the British arms a lustre unequalled since the days of Blenheim and Ramilies. In these successes, and in the hopes which they afforded to sinking Europe, he saw the triumph of that system which had been supported by his ministers against the unremitting opposition of their adversaries. This opposition had not been merely theoretical or parliamentary; the professors of it had been in office, and had acted steadily on the principles which they had avowed. There could be no doubt, therefore, that if the reins of power had been committed to their hands, the war in the peninsula would either have been altogether abandoned or maintained with languor. Unless it be supposed, therefore, that the prince should have condescended to the spirit of party; that he should have indulged his own predilections at the expence of the public interests, over which he was called to preside; there can be no meaning in the charge so indecently brought against him for deserting his early favourites. It ought to be recollected also, that the persons who were truly included under this appellation, were no longer among the candidates for power. Fox was no more, and Sheridan had in a great measure ceased to take a share in the public business. The present leaders of the whig party possessed few of those qualities which had recommended their departed friend to the favour of the Prince Regent; they had

of course no claims on his friendship, which even in a matter of private arrangement, might have justified a marked partiality. Those who ascribed the change which had taken place in the sentiments of his royal highness, to the influence of his private friends, forgot that these friendships were of long standing, and existed in equal strength, before any change of opinion on public affairs was indicated

As soon as the restrictions expired, the prince addressed a letter to the Duke of York, in which he began by stating his anxiety to communicate his sentiments on public affairs, which he had been restrained from doing at an earlier period of the session of parliament, by a desire that the catholic question might undergo the most deliberate discussion, unmixed with other considerations. His royal highness then stated that he had been called upon when he was nominated to the regency, and at a moment of great difficulty and danger, to choose his ministers; that a sense of duty to his royal father had decided that choice; and that his conduct on that occasion had obtained the approbation of those for whom his royal highness entertained respect. That in various instances where the law of the last session had left the prince at full liberty, he had renounced all personal gratifications, that his majesty might resume on his restoration to health every power and prerogative belonging to his crown. The prince then expressed a sentiment which did him infinite honour. "I am certainly the last person," said he, "to whom it can be permitted to despair of our royal father's recovery." He proceeded to say that a new era had arrived; that the events which had distinguished the period of his restricted regency were calculated to give great satisfaction; that the most important acquisitions had in this short space been made to the British empire; that the national faith had been preserved inviolate, and that the glory of the British arms had been exalted. He expressed his fixed determination to avoid any measure which might have led his allies to suppose, that he meant to depart from the present system; he stated that perseverance alone could achieve the great object in view; and that he could not withhold his approbation from those who had honourably distinguished themselves in support of wise measures. The letter then contains the following generous declaration: "I have no predilections to indulge, no resentments to gratify, no objects to attain, but such as are common to the whole empire. If such is the leading principle of my conduct, and I can appeal to the past in evidence of what the future will be, I flatter myself with the support of parliament, and of a candid and enlightened nation."—His royal highness expressed a wish that some of those persons with whom the habits of his early life had been formed, would strengthen his hands, and constitute a part of his government; and that a vigorous and united administration on the most liberal basis might be formed. The letter concluded by authorising the Duke of York to communicate the sentiments of the Prince Regent to Lord Grey, who would make them known to Lord Grenville; and a copy of the letter was at the same time sent to Mr Perceval.

Lords Grey and Grenville confined their answer to those passages of the letter which they supposed to have a more immediate reference to themselves. They expressed an earnest desire to assist in healing the divisions of the country, and uniting both the government and the people. They disclaimed all personal feelings; but, on public grounds, they declared, without reserve, the impossibility of their uniting with the administration. The dif-

ferences of opinion betwixt them and the ministers were, they said, too many and too important to admit of such an union; and they had acted in the same manner on two former occasions when their advice had been required. They declared, that the reasons which then influenced their conduct had been strengthened by the increasing dangers of the times, and that, down to the date of the letter, there had not appeared any approximation towards such an agreement of opinion on the public interests, as could alone form a basis for the honourable union of parties previously opposed to each other. The differences betwixt themselves and the administration, they said, embraced almost all the leading features of the present policy of the empire: the catholic question was, above all others, important in itself, and connected with the most pressing dangers; and on this subject they entertained opinions directly opposite to those of the ministers. They were firmly persuaded of the necessity of a total change in the government of Ireland, and of the immediate repeal of those civil disabilities under which so large a portion of his majesty's subjects still laboured on account of their religious opinions. That the first advice which it would be their duty to offer to his royal highness, would be to recommend to parliament this repeal; nor could they even, for the shortest period, make themselves responsible for any farther delay in the proposal of a measure, without which they could entertain no hopes of rendering themselves useful to the prince or to the country.

This answer was decisive as to the views of Lords Grey and Grenville, and the utter hopelessness of any attempt to accomplish a fair and honourable union betwixt them and the ministers. Such an answer might perhaps have been expected; yet was the conduct of the Prince Regent deserving of the highest approbation. He himself had set a noble example; he had found that the unfavourable impressions on his mind against his minister were erroneous; that Mr Perceval had conducted the public affairs on principles best adapted to secure the honour and interests of the country, and was therefore entitled to his confidence. The prince therefore acted as became his high station. He found that it would ill befit that station to carry to the government of a great empire party views, and jealousies, and suspicions; to look at every measure of the minister with doubt and distrust, and to suppose that nothing could be done well because done by Mr Perceval. He resolved to govern the country for the interest of the people, and not for the interest of a party; he determined to judge of his minister from actual observation, to try him by facts, and to decide by experience alone. The result was, as his royal highness's letter proved, the most perfect satisfaction with, and confidence in, that minister. Finding that so great a change had been produced in his own mind, by a knowledge of the integrity and talents of his ministers, and of the great public benefits of which they had been the instruments, he might reasonably have supposed that a similar change had taken place in the minds of others; and that, after an experience of the system, from which so many advantages had sprung, the breach betwixt the contending parties might have been healed. Influenced by these generous considerations, his royal highness was desirous of giving his early friends that opportunity which they had so long desired, of turning their best talents to some use in the public service. But in this hope he was mis-

taken, and determined as he was that the interests of the country should not be sacrificed to any system of favouritism, he immediately signified his pleasure to Mr Perceval, that he might consider himself as the prime minister.

Great surprise and dissatisfaction were expressed by many members of opposition on account of the rapid manner in which the letter of the Prince Regent was answered, and the proposal which it contained rejected by Lords Grey and Grenville. It was said, that as his royal highness had graciously expressed the satisfaction he would feel if some of those persons, with whom the habits of his early life had been formed, would strengthen his hands, and constitute a part of his government, some communication should have been made to the party before any reply was returned; that Lord Grey was not entitled to treat with haughty indifference those who had more particularly been attached to the late Mr Fox; that by neglecting to communicate with them, he had treated them as if they were in a state of utter dependence, having no will or voice of their own, but bound to follow with blind confidence wherever he should lead them; that the letter of the Prince Regent could not be considered merely as a proposal to Lords Grey and Grenville, because it alluded to individuals among whom Lord Grey could scarcely be included, and Lord Grenville not at all; yet these noble lords had acted as if they conceived themselves to combine all the rank, talent, and influence of the party; that, although they might have rejected the proposal, so far as they were themselves concerned, they had no right to commit their friends, and that they ought merely to have expressed their readiness (before making any definitive answer) to have communicated with the other persons to whom an evident allusion had been made in the letter of his royal highness. Some of their retainers did not hesitate to censure, in very strong terms, this overweening spirit of aristocracy; to insinuate that, although the noble lords might have a common object, they could have no common principle or system of opinions; and even to declare that their scrupulous and over-refined notions of honour should not have been allowed to stand in the way of the more substantial objects, to which their dependants had for so many years looked up with avidity. These reproaches served for a time to amuse the public; and they proved that, how erroneous soever some of the political opinions of the leaders of opposition may be, the eminent men who avow them, are, in highmindedness and integrity, as far removed, as in rank and talent, above the persons by whom they are surrounded.

It was much disputed about this time, whether the letter of the Prince Regent ought to be considered as the production of his royal highness, or of his minister. As a general maxim, it is unquestionable, that the monarch of this country can do nothing without a responsible adviser; yet the measure adopted by his royal highness must be considered as an exception to the general rule, since it was one on which a minister could not, with propriety, offer any advice. The same persons who wished to consider the letter as the production of the minister, had not long before proclaimed to the country that the prince would soon be called upon to act in a manner which would prove his independence of his father's advisers; and yet they would now have had it believed, that in the only step which his royal highness could have taken without the advice of his ministers, he had been influenced and controlled by them. This insinuation proceeded from a desire of

charging Mr Perceval with insincerity —a charge, which, in his case, it was strange to hear even from the clamour of disappointed ambition. An attempt was made to support so groundless an accusation, by a reference to some occurrences which had lately taken place in the House of Commons.—Mr Curwen, in the debate on a motion of Mr Whitbread, relating to American affairs, had very confidently prophesied the disgrace of Mr Perceval. The minister had of course no alternative but to acquiesce in a statement which his silence would have stamped with authenticity, or to deny, as he did, with firmness, that he was soon to be dismissed from the councils of his sovereign.—The letter of the Prince Regent, however, considered as the offspring of his own feelings, bears the most unequivocal marks of liberal and patriotic sentiment on the part of his royal highness; while there was in the whole course of the proceedings nothing but the greatest candour and integrity manifested on the part of him whom his royal highness had chosen as his chief adviser.

Some changes of no great importance in the ministerial arrangements took place about this period. The seals of the foreign department, which had been resigned by the Marquis Wellesley, were put into the hands of the Earl of Liverpool until a successor to the marquis should be appointed. It would have been a subject of deep regret had the Earl of Liverpool received the foreign seals otherwise than in trust; since, notwithstanding the high opinion entertained of his lordship's general talents, his removal from the war department must have been very injurious to the public service. The war in the peninsula had been successfully conducted by the Earl of Wellington; and the country was prepared to offer no small tribute of praise to the minister with whom that illustrious officer had planned and carried into execution all his arrangements. Lord Castlereagh was afterwards appointed to the foreign department, and the Earl of Liverpool continued in that station in which his services had already secured so many advantages.

After the distinct and unequivocal terms in which Lords Grey and Grenville had declined the proposal made to them by the Prince Regent—after their solemn declaration that they would form no union with the ministers, and after their assurances that they differed in opinion with them on all the leading points of the policy of the empire, it might have been thought, that no one could for a moment have indulged a hope of accomplishing that coalition which had been so anxiously desired.—A motion, however, was, in a few days after the expiration of the restrictions, made by Lord Borringdon in the House of Lords, for an address to the Prince Regent, to represent to his royal highness, that the administration to which he might be pleased to commit the management of affairs, should be so composed as to unite, as far as possible, the confidence and good-will of all classes of the people; that in the present state of Ireland, it was impossible that such general confidence could be enjoyed by any administration which opposed the claims of the Roman catholics; and that his royal highness should endeavour to form a cabinet, which, by consulting the affections of all classes of the community, might effectually call forth the resources of the empire.—The noble lord who made this motion, professed much respect for the ministers; he declared that he had not been influenced by the feelings of party in bringing forward the motion, and that the motion itself was not intended to effect a change in the administration. To eve-

ry other member of the House, however, the motion seemed to be directed to this precise purpose, and it was so explained even by Earl Grey himself, who avowed his understanding of it in the course of the debate.

The motion was supported upon the following grounds.—It was admitted on all hands, that the conduct of the Prince Regent, at the commencement of the restricted regency, had evinced the most amiable sentiments, and the most delicate notions of duty, towards his royal father. But a new æra had arrived, when, from an utter despair of his majesty's restoration to health, the prince could no longer be influenced by such considerations, and could not be precluded from pursuing the course which might appear best adapted to secure the interests of the country.—What then was the situation of the country? for on this the motion was founded. In some respects it was in the highest degree flattering and prosperous; the colonial power of the enemy had been anihilated all over the globe; the British navy had been every where triumphant; Portugal had been wrested from the military occupation of the French; in the tenth year of the war, and the fourth of its ravages in the peninsula, not only had Portugal been defended, but the British army had, on every occasion, covered itself with glory in the territories of Spain.—This, however, was but one side of the picture; and on turning to the other, it was impossible not to be filled with gloom and despondency "Commercial distress all over the country,—our manufacturers reduced almost to a state of starvation,—new laws, giving unprecedented encouragement and effect to our paper currency. In the interior of the country there appeared a spirit of disorder and contempt of the law bordering on insurrection. At a time when England was not only at war with a power whose dominions were more extensive than those of Charlemagne, but also with every potentate of Europe except those of the peninsula, this was an appalling state of things; but the most appalling circumstance was, that while almost the whole population of the continent of Europe was united against these islands, whose numbers were so small in proportion, and notwithstanding the general complexion of the times, one fourth of our population was excluded from the pale of the constitution—excluded by various laws founded on causes and principles which had long ceased to operate,—laws which had relation only to the peculiar circumstances of the age in which they were enacted, and the continuance of which, till this day, was a scandal to the nation, and a serious deduction from the political power of the country. Such was the general outline of our situation. Our resources, however, if properly managed, and called into action, were fully adequate to overcome all the difficulties by which we were surrounded: with an united people, and a government, meriting and receiving their confidence, the empire was perfectly competent to avert every danger which threatened it; the energies and resources of this island were equal, not only to its own necessities, but to continue the assistance at present imparted to its allies—and even, if it were found expedient, to extend it still farther. But, without such an union among the people, without such a confidence in the government, no results beneficial to the empire could be expected.—It was under those circumstances, that, according to an authentic, though not official document, it appeared that his royal highness the Prince Regent had expressed his wish that a government should be formed on an extended and liberal basis. A negociation was accordingly set on foot,

in order to carry this desirable object into effect. That negociation had unfortunately failed, and the wishes of the Prince Regent, and the expectations of the country, had been disappointed. It was from the period of the failure of this negociation that the commencement of those alarming symptoms, which threatened the integrity of the empire, was to be dated. What were those portentous features of the present time which foreboded so much calamity? 'I wish to God Maynooth college had never existed!' had been, in another place, the language of a confidential servant of the crown. What was this but evincing a decided hostility to the religion and political rights of a great portion of the population of these dominions? What was it but the proof of a *malus animus* with regard to them, swaying the councils of the crown? What must be the consequence of such a system if continued? But were these the only symptoms that evinced the deterioration which had taken place in our domestic circumstances? Were their lordships aware of the state of the press? Did they not know that it was formed into two distinct and opposite parties? and were not they to read on the one side, of an overweening, overbearing, proud, ambitious aristocracy, that strove to domineer over the throne itself; and, on the other, the most virulent and scurrilous attacks, even upon the Prince Regent in person? Were they aware of the effect which these things must have upon the country at large; and could they be indifferent to the effect, under the present circumstances of the nation and the world, of such a mischievous application of that great engine of public opinion, the press? These were not all the symptoms that seemed to characterise this eventful period. The Prince Regent himself (speaking of his royal highness in a constitutional sense,) even the prince himself was not exempted from his share in these alarming transactions. They had heard, for instance, of the highest honours, of the most distinguished situations, being offered to various individuals, and refused upon the ground, that acceptance would be contrary to the honour of those persons, who found it impossible for them to do any thing to assist, or give countenance to the system upon which the government was conducted. It was rumoured, that all the bent, aim, and force of the government, was inflexible hostility to the liberal principles which alone could ensure conciliation and union. This, however, was only rumour; but what was certainly true, was, that on the 13th of February, the Prince Regent, in a manner that did honour to the high situation which he held, and with a sincerity and good faith well becoming his character, expressed his wishes, that at the present critical moment no measure should be adopted which could excite the smallest suspicion that he intended to abandon his allies, or cease to give them the same liberal assistance as formerly. Yet, subsequent to this declaration, it was well known that his royal highness had been obliged to accept the resignation of a noble marquis, who had in some measure identified himself with the cause of our allies.

"Such was the general view of the situation of the country since the expiration of the restrictions upon the regent. Our domestic policy of exclusion appeared to have assumed a more decided shape, and the bright prospects which appeared to be opening to us had given way to a deeper gloom. From the difficulties with which the nation had to struggle, and the very inadequate composition of the present government to meet these difficulties, it followed, as a necessary consequence, that some change in

the frame of that government should, if possible, be effected. Was such a change really hopeless? On the 13th of February a wish had been expressed by his royal highness to form an administration on a broad and liberal basis. That wish had unfortunately not been gratified. But the wish which existed then no doubt still continued; and the object of the motion was, if possible, to give effect to the declared desire of his royal highness.—The attention of the House was then drawn to those parts of the letter of the noble lords, which had been particularly dwelt upon, and which had been misapprehended. The noble lords, having assigned the reasons of their refusal, say, 'It is on this ground alone that we must express, without reserve, the impossibility of our uniting with the present government.' Now, what had been understood by this expression of the noble lords? Why, that they insisted on forming the government themselves—that they would hear of no persons but of their own selection, and of their own principles; and that they would not sit in the cabinet with those who were the confidential advisers of the Prince Regent. This was the interpretation which had been given of that part of their answer. Yet in saying they would not consent to unite with the present government,—that they could not assist an administration whose proceedings they disapproved, it did not follow that they would not act with them, provided, of course, they were not placed in such situations as would prevent them from carrying into effect those measures which they thought most conducive to the general interest. In the next paragraph, the noble lords observe, 'Into the detail of those differences we are unwilling to enter; they embrace almost all the leading features of the present policy of the empire.' The principles of policy here alluded to were, the conduct to be pursued with regard to America,—the bullion question,—the war in the peninsula,—and the treatment of the catholics. Could it be fairly supposed that it was the intention of the noble lords, if they should come into office, to concede the whole matter in controversy with America? Could it be fairly supposed that they were prepared to sacrifice the maritime rights of the country, and lay our naval grandeur at the feet of America? The next question was that of the bullion. What was the nature of the difference here? It might be said, that the noble lords would immediately open the bank, and compel cash payments. It was no doubt probable that they would make the situation of the currency a matter of serious consideration, and that they would act upon the system of restoring the cash payments to the country, when a favourable opportunity occurred for doing so. But was it to be supposed that they would force such a measure forward before its time,—that they would urge it without preparation,—without regard to circumstances,—without any precaution that might render it secure? As to the peninsula, the noble lords were boldly charged with a resolution to withdraw our assistance from the Spanish cause. They might certainly disapprove of the circumstances of the war; but it was not to be conceived that they would abandon it without due examination. Of course, their conduct in this point would be strongly influenced by the larger information on the circumstances, objects, and means of the contest, which office might give them, and to which they could not now have access. It was not to be supposed that they would proceed in this direction without communicating with the distinguished person who was now at the head of the British forces in the peninsula,—a man who deserved every attention and every

praise,—who was at once the great general and the great statesman,—whose physical courage was equalled only by the moral fortitude which he manifested in opposing those who, not being perfectly acquainted with the situation of the peninsula, were desirous of withdrawing from the contest there. It was presumed, that, on their admission into the prince's cabinet, the British forces would be recalled; but was this a just presumption? The last point was the state of Ireland. With respect to the disallowance of the claims of a large portion of his majesty's subjects, on this some difficulty arose. It was less easy to define here the limit of the objects which the noble lords might have in contemplation. The difference between them and administration was more wide on this than on the other points. The noble lords observed in their letter, 'We are firmly persuaded of the necessity of a total change in the present system of that country, and of the immediate repeal of those civil disabilities under which so large a portion of his majesty's subjects still labour, on account of their religious opinions. To recommend to parliament this repeal, is the first advice which it would be our duty to offer to his royal highness.' In this part, more than any other, the general interpretation seemed to be warranted by the construction of the words. The most suitable proceeding in bringing about this great measure of redemption would be, that the proposal of consideration should come from administration,—that the House should then sanction a resolution for taking the question into consideration at a future time; and, finally, that every thing relating to the arrangement and detail of the question, should be left to the executive government, by whom a specific plan should be laid before the legislature. By these means all the grace of originating the measure would attach to the crown, to which, in truth, it ought to belong. Parliament would be pledged to nothing but the mere consideration of the question, leaving the arrangement and detail where it should be left, with the executive government; and whatever was proposed by it, parliament, in the course of the next session, might reject or adopt. But still, in the letter of the noble lords, there certainly was nothing to give the idea that they would at once recommend the total abolition of catholic restraints, without delay or consideration. From their former declarations,—from every former means of expressing their sentiments, it might be not unjustly conceived that they would proceed in this momentous affair with all the necessary prudence; that they would suffer a certain period to elapse before the granting of full remission; and that they would grant nothing without providing for the security of the existing establishments. This was the fair construction of the policy which they were likely to adopt; and if this construction were justified by what they might hear in the course of the debate, was it not to be desired that all the strength the country was capable of affording, should be applied to the purposes of conducting it through the difficulties of its present situation? Was it not most desirable that this country, and what remained of independent Europe, should be gratified by seeing an administration combined of all the wisdom, experience, and authority that were to be found among us, formed to preserve domestic tranquillity, and to command the respect of foreign powers?—The present motion was consistent with the principles of the constitution, and conformable to its practice in the best periods of our history, and therefore the House would suffer it to go to the Prince Regent."

Although the motion was manifest-

ly directed to accomplish a change of administration, the ministers abstained from all violence in the debate, and seemed in a great measure to leave the question upon its own merits, to the dispassionate consideration of parliament. They could not help remarking, however, "that besides being chargeable with much inconsistency, the motion had two separate objects, the one avowed, and the other concealed. It began by using the most flattering language towards the Prince Regent. It proposed certainly a most desirable object, the formation of an administration calculated to conciliate all his majesty's subjects. Who disagreed with the motion on that point? But it was stated that such an object was impossible of attainment, from the known principles of the administration. The mover wished for a broad-bottomed administration, which was in general the most mischievous of all administrations. The motion proposed a more extended administration: What did this mean, after it had been stated that the present ministers were, from principle, so obnoxious to the formation of any such administration? As to the estimation in which the present administration was held by the public, the people of this good-natured country were weak and foolish enough to sanction it by their confidence. Let the cause be what it might, it so happened, that the confidence of the country was possessed by the administration; and that was certainly no very good reason for addressing the Prince Regent to change it. If the Prince Regent had any power at all inherent in himself, it was that of choosing his servants. What advisers should the sovereign be supposed constitutionally to have in the act of choosing an administration? After an administration was chosen, then, indeed, there existed responsible advisers; but antecedently to that, no one knew where to look for them. If the proposed address should be adopted, parliament would be, in fact, doing all it could to destroy responsibility. It would be trenching on one of the dearest prerogatives of the crown it would be attempting nothing less than to appoint the ministry itself: And, besides, its conduct would be highly unconstitutional, because it brought forward not one act by which its dissatisfaction with the present administration was marked. It was said, indeed, that the administration was averse to the consideration of the catholic petition; but the basis of their opinion was the principle of the revolution of 1688. The chief principle of that revolution was civil freedom engrafted on religious freedom, on liberal and extensive toleration; but, at the same time, all connected with a view to the maintenance of the protestant national church, and the protestant succession. Every thing was then done consistently with these objects; and now we were asked to depart from the establishments which were then so wisely formed. We were asked also to depart from those establishments, without any counterpoise to the danger to be apprehended. Securities, indeed, were talked of, and were even paraded in publications; but when the nature of these securities was asked, who could explain it? Who could inform the House what they were? Nothing could give enlightened men more pleasure than to be convinced that no danger existed from concession to the catholics.—But when no person came forward with the securities, when the one already proposed was abandoned, what could be done but to make a stand with the establishments, as settled at the Revolution? Let the catholics, then, bring forward their securities, and every person would be willing to enter into the question of their claims; but until

that event should come about, who could consent to a radical change in the constitution, or to adopt any measure which would put its existence to hazard? The wording of the address was on the principle of exclusion, while it pretended to lead to the formation of an administration on a broad and liberal basis.—That the proposed address could only be intended to dictate to the Prince Regent, who had already endeavoured to form an administration on a liberal and extended basis. With reference to several of the political grounds on which a difference of opinion subsisted betwixt the great parties—the conduct of the war in the peninsula—the orders in council—the state of the currency, &c., it might be asked whether the Lords Grey and Grenville would be so rash as to propose a radical change in all the measures adopted by government, or whether they would be inclined to follow the same plans, and only to change the administration?—That in every thing the ministers had done, they had repeatedly obtained the sanction of parliament; yet the House was now called upon, without any good reason, to present an address which must have accomplished an entire change of administration, and a complete alteration of the system hitherto pursued. That it remained a question of great importance, whether parliament should hazard the introduction of catholicism to the government of the country, disposed, as persons of that sect were, to spurn at every fair and reasonable compromise; and looking thus at one most important branch of the motion, it was impossible to entertain it for a moment. It would have been an insult to carry up an address to the Prince Regent such that which had been submitted to the House."

This motion, although it failed of its intended effect, drew from Earl Grey an exposition of his political creed, which, as it may be a matter of curiosity in this age of political discussion, shall be here recorded. On this trying occasion, when there was yet a hope of his accession to power, Lord Grey was rather cautious and reserved in the declaration of his principles; yet enough was said to let any man of candour and understanding into these important secrets. "He did not deny that the motion appeared to him substantially intended to produce a change of administration. The noble lord by whom that motion was brought forward, could have had no other object when he made it. It could be understood in no other sense than an application to the Prince Regent to remove the present ministers from their situations for the reasons there stated, that such a measure could alone conciliate the different parts of this empire, at a period which more than any other required the full exercise of all the resources of the country. This, it has been said by the noble and learned lord who spoke last, (Lord Eldon) was a strong measure. That it was a strong measure he would not attempt to deny. But he confessed he had heard with much surprise that night, that this measure was unconstitutional; and that to express the sentiments of the House, with respect to the present ministry, was to interfere with the prerogative possessed by the crown of nominating its ministers. It was certainly no part of the duty of the House either to nominate the ministers of the crown, or to point out the method in which they ought to be nominated. But while he allowed this, he was of opinion, that if sufficient grounds could be shewn why a ministry were unfit to fill the situations which they held, there was nothing in parliamentary precedent to prevent the House from making an application to the crown for the remo-

val of those ministers, when it was thought they were unequal to the crisis. This he would contend was a subject within the cognizance of parliament; and to exercise their powers on such an occasion, was not only a legitimate but a laudable object; it was an endeavour to consolidate all the strength and resources of the empire. The question for the consideration of the House then was, whether the present administration, in its quality and principles, presented obstacles to the union of the strength and resources of all parts of the empire. It might safely be said of this administration, that it was formed on the express principle of resistance to the catholic claims. This was the principle by which the person who was at the head of that administration made his way to power. This was the principle which led him to make use of all the arts of detraction to attain that object. This principle he loudly proclaimed, from the moment at which he had been called from the bar to take a share in political life up to the present instant. It was his boast—it was put by him in the front of the battle—the eternal exclusion of his Roman catholic fellow-subjects from any share in the constitution. When he had stated, that such were the principles of that distinguished individual, he had no need to say more to shew that they were the principles of administration. He was the administration. Whither he led, the rest were obliged to follow. Was he to be told by the noble and learned lord on the woolsack, who had just stated resistance to the catholics to be a fundamental principle of the Revolution, that that noble and learned lord differed on this subject from the person at the head of the administration? Did the secretary of state for the Home department differ from him? He could hardly think that the person who wished from his heart that Maynooth College had never existed, was hostile to the principle of his leader. Perhaps it might be said that the new addition to their strength differed on this point. Of the noble lord he alluded to (Lord Castlereagh) he was unwilling to speak in his absence. He could not, however, forbear saying, that it appeared to him the principles of that noble lord were even very much as he himself described Europe to be, 'In an unsatisfactory state.' Agreeing to the principle of those who advocated the claims of the catholics, that noble lord could never see a convenient time for the application of that principle, so that he fully coincided in the practical part of the conduct of his co-adjutors. Perhaps it would be said, the noble earl opposite differed on this principle. But as the leading members of the cabinet maintained the necessity of exclusion, and the others blindly followed them in their practice, he was warranted in stating the present administration to be founded on a principle of resistance to the catholic claims.—The noble and learned lord had said, he had never heard of any sermons lately preached on this subject. Where the noble lord had lived he knew not; but he knew that within these few weeks, persons invested with the sacred character of clergymen, forgetting all the principles of that religion which they professed, instead of preaching the doctrines of peace and unity, which it was their duty to preach, had thought proper to endeavour to inspire one part of the community with hostile feelings against their brethren; and of those persons who acted this most unbecoming part, some were supposed to be seriously connected with those who composed the present administration. One of them, it appeared from the Gazette, was lately selected to be a chaplain to the Prince Regent.—Had he not a right, therefore, to call the exist-

ng cabinet a cabinet of intolerance, preventing that union of common interests and affection, so necessary to the country in her present hour of peril? They had heard that night of broad and narrow administrations; and the noble and learned lord on the woolsack had observed, that nothing was so mischievous as a broad-bottomed administration. With this character he was disposed to concur, if the noble lord meant such a broad and liberal basis as should comprehend persons of the most discordant opinions, who, for the sake of coalition, must either sacrifice their own sentiments, or carry dissensions into the cabinet. But the present administration was narrowed to complete unanimity; for if report spoke true of the other accessions to the administration, they would be found possessed of exactly the same character, and to be very suitable additions to an administration founded on a principle of resistance to the catholic claims. He saw two noble lords on the cross bench (Lords Sidmouth and Buckinghamshire) who were publicly designated as the future supporters of administration. He knew not whether any communication had yet been made to them from the ministry. Who were these noble lords? They were the only lords who, in the late debate on the catholic claims in that House, ventured to assert the principle of eternal exclusion. One of them came forward with the doctrine of the coronation oath, operating as an eternal exclusion against the catholics, and the other with perfect consistency had proposed measures which united every class of dissenters in one common cause. Now looking at an administration so formed, was it not, he would ask, an administration which must of necessity be obnoxious to a great part of his majesty's subjects? The noble and learned lord had told them, that nothing would make him so happy as to extend the benefits of the constitution to all classes of the people, in so far as the same could be done without danger to the state; but, that the fundamental principles of the Revolution stood in the way of all further concession. For his part he denied this to be a fundamental principle of the Revolution. He denied that it was the principle of those great men by whom the Revolution was accomplished. The disabilities against the catholics were not established for the purpose of guarding the national church against those who professed another system of religion, but for the purpose of withstanding political tenets, by which the constitution was endangered. 'The noble and learned lord,' exclaimed Lord Grey, 'calls upon us for securities. We ask him for his danger?' The danger consisted not in admitting the catholics, but in excluding them from the constitution. Already they were possessed of great riches and great political power, and constituted an important part of the strength of the state. By this exclusion they were forced and united into a separate interest. Take away the exclusion, and, the motives for a separate interest no longer existing, the hostility to the state would also necessarily cease. But what securities were to be proposed? The noble and learned lord had stated that Mr Pitt knew of none. Mr Pitt brought forward this very measure of concession to the catholics, which he considered as necessary to the safety of the state. Could he propose such a measure, if he thought it would endanger the safety of the state? But the noble and learned lord had said, that Mr Pitt had no securities to propose. Then all the conduct of Mr Pitt was nothing but a pretence; and he did not state the securities because he was unwilling, but because he was unable to do so. The noble and learned lord had spoken in encomiastic

terms of the value which he set on Mr Pitt's friendship, he declared that he wanted no other eulogy on his tomb than that he had been Mr Pitt's friend; but if this conduct of his to his departed friend was friendship, he would rather, for his part, have that noble and learned lord for his foe than his friend. Let noble lords put themselves in the situation of the catholics, and say, what would their feelings be, if they had been treated by the government in the same manner? The catholics had received many concessions, in their very nature such, that they could not stop with them—no philosopher or statesman could think of them but as temporary expedients. The greatest names had deemed ultimate concessions right. Mr Pitt, Mr Fox, Mr Burke, and Mr Windham, all of them friends to the established church, however much they might differ on other subjects, concurred in this, that conciliation to the catholics was absolutely necessary. In 1795, when a noble lord (Fitzwilliam) had gone over to Ireland with the power of conceding the claims of the catholics, their expectations, thereby excited, were speedily cut short by his sudden recal. He would not enter into a retrospect of the scenes of blood and torture that ensued; scenes even more horrible than those which attended the French Revolution. After this period came the Union, another source of the excitation and disappointment of the hopes of this body. By whose means was that Union obtained? By the support of the catholics. By a too ready confidence the catholics of Ireland did then come forward and support that Union, which, without their assistance, could never have been carried. Their disappointment must now be aggravated by the feeling, that, if not foolishly duped, their wishes might already have been granted. If the House, like the catholics, had supported the Union, under the hopes of attaining the cession of their rights through the calmer discussions of the united parliament, what would they think of the government which imposed an everlasting bar against their approaches? They could not wonder if great disturbances were the consequence, and if from affectionate subjects they should come to look on this country with ill-will and hatred. In what respect was the situation of the catholics now hopeless? He did not wish to name the Prince Regent for the purpose of influencing the debate. He would not state what the feelings and opinions of his royal highness might be at the present moment, having only the opinion of his responsible advisers to look to; but he could not help stating, that a very general hope was entertained by the catholics, that the Prince Regent was favourable to their claims, and that a new era would by the course of nature arrive when bigotry and oppression should no longer oppose them. That new era had now arrived; but instead of its being to the catholics a consummation of their hopes, they saw the whole power of the government embodied against them, under some cursed and baleful influence; and nothing remaining to them but a prospect of perpetual exclusion from the benefits of the constitution. If the House believed the Irish to be what they had ever been represented, a warm-hearted, a sanguine, a high-spirited people—if they believed them to have contributed largely to the military glory of this empire, the dangerous effects which such a disappointment might produce, would be formidable in the same proportion. We might anticipate dangers greater than any which this country had yet struggled with. A noble lord (Harrowby) had asked, if it was not mockery and insult to address the prince to form a combined administration, after

the correspondence which had been so much referred to? But in this a noble and learned lord had corrected him, and justly defined that it was not for a broader administration, but for one avoiding the character of the present, and calculated to ensure the affections of the people. It might be as narrow as the present, and as exclusive; but as it would exclude only those dangerous principles which went to disunite and distract the country, it would be preferable to that now in being. Those who were friendly to the catholics would of course be more acceptable to that body. The noble and learned lord had boasted that the present administration possessed the affections of the people of England. Undoubtedly popularity was dear to him; but he had never endeavoured to court popularity by a departure from any one principle of which he approved, whatever obloquy might be the consequence. He supposed the meaning of the noble and learned lord was, that the present administration was supported by the opinion of the majority of the people of England on the catholic question. Of that he was very much inclined to doubt. He was aware, however, that the person at the head of the government might again employ all kinds of arts to inflame the people with imaginary dangers, aided as he might probably be with all the power of the church. But what would be the consequence of his success? To aggravate the evil and increase the danger—to make the catholics perceive that it was no longer a set of men whom they had to consider as their enemies, but the people of England; and what could be the result [illegible] the separation of the two coun[illegible]?—Who would be able to re[illegible] the errors of an administration powerful in all the means by which empires were hurried on to ruin? He believed, however, that the people of England were, as they had been at a former period, ready to support the measure of catholic emancipation.—That question would once have been carried with as little difficulty as any matter ever proposed to parliament, but now the cry was raised against it by those who, with equal guilt, had first instilled into the royal mind those scruples of which they afterwards took advantage; for all which a deep and heavy responsibility rested upon their heads.—The noble lord had enquired, if the present administration were displaced, where would they get another? In the letter subscribed by his noble friend and himself, they had stated, that they could not join with men united together on the principle of catholic exclusion, and could not come into power without advising the crown to give relief to the catholics. But might they not unite with such as held similar opinions with them on this point?—When he signed the letter, he was most sincere in saying, he did not act on personal exclusive principles; for he might, perhaps, be permitted to say this of himself, that, however much he had mixed in political controversy, he was little subject to political resentments. When an union could be honourable and advantageous to the nation, he would ever be ready to unite. But character was as much the strength of men as it was that of nations, and he could conceive nothing more dangerous than to shock the public opinion by an appearance of sacrificing principle for the sake of attaining office and emolument; for himself he disclaimed any such views, or any great desire for place at all. But did the noble lords opposite—they who were the advisers of the regent on this occasion—who were his ministers before, and had continued to be his ministers since; did they expect that in consequence of the regent's letter his noble friend and himself

could have consented to coalesce with them?—Would they venture to deny, that they were consulted on the letter? If so, it would establish the point, that there was an influence behind the throne, the most dangerous that could exist. Nay, he would put the question in another form, and suppose he and his friends had been in power, and had sent such a letter to the noble lords opposite, would they have acceded to the offer? He believed they would not. But were there no others with whom they (Lord Grey and his friends) could unite? or, if both parties were put out of the question, were there not others to form an administration without them? If the address could be carried, and the regent could find others of whom he might form a cabinet, holding the same opinions on the catholic question with himself (Lord Grey), they should have his warm support; and on any points in which he might differ from them, his opposition should be reluctant and gentle. He was too much exhausted to go through the remaining topics at any length. On the repeal of the civil disabilities of the catholics, therefore, he would only briefly state, that he was prepared to define what securities he deemed sufficient on this score to satisfy him.

"Adverting to the questions at issue between this country and America, he would embrace the occasion of saying, that if it was imputed to him that he was disposed to give up one single right, or to abandon any principle connected with the maintenance of our essential maritime interests, the imputation was most false and groundless. His feelings in support of those interests, would lead him to go as far as any man, although he should still deem it necessary to weigh the true value of those disputed interests, and to guard against making a sacrifice disproportionate to the object to be attained. If once persuaded that the national honour was at stake, or that those rights on which our national independence was founded, were attacked, he should feel no difficulty to act with all the directness, and vigour, and determination, which, under such circumstances, would be indispensable to our safety. But he could never lose sight of that principle which ought to lie at the basis of all national policy, namely, that, as it had been well expressed by Mr Burke, 'as we ought never to go to war for a profitable wrong, so we ought never to go to war for an unprofitable right.' If the prosecution of the right were likely to lead to consequences more dangerous and destructive than those anticipated from its relinquishment, it was almost superfluous to say, such a right ought not to be insisted on. He well remembered, that during an opposition carried on with something more than parliamentary virulence and pertinacity, while he had the honour of holding an office in administration, he was often pressed in the other House to assume a different tone, and to act upon what was called a more decisive policy. A new system had since, in his opinion unhappily for this country, enabled the enemy to succeed in his incitements; to triumph in his policy, and to make us the instruments of his ambition. On the state of the circulation, interesting as it was, and decisive as his views were upon it, did it follow that he held it to be indispensable to recommend immediately the resumption of cash payments by the Bank? It was not to the omission of that particular measure that his principal objections were directed, but to a perseverance in a system not founded upon just principles, and which therefore the longer it continued became the more menacing and calamitous in its operation. His wish was to revert as much as possible to true

principles, and keep the circulating medium within certain bounds. Supposing, then, the catholic question decided, an impassable line of separation existed between him and the administration, in the proposition for making bank-notes a legal tender. With respect to the policy which the circumstances of the present crisis demanded as to the affairs of the peninsula, he certainly was not prepared to say that it was expedient to recall our troops immediately; but he certainly did not wish to proceed in that expensive mode of warfare, without having some military authority as to the probable result of it; and he wished, above all, to see the opinion of the illustrious commander of the forces in that country on the subject. No part of national policy was more open to repeated discussion, or more calculated to engender a diversity of opinion, than the most proper mode of carrying on foreign warfare. The first principle in the policy of all wars was to inflict the utmost possible injury on the enemy, at the expence of the least possible injury to ourselves. Such a question, therefore, as that which related to the continuance of the present contest in the peninsula, depended on a variety of considerations, arising out of recent events and the consequent and relative situations of ourselves and of the enemy. In determining on the expediency of any measure of this nature, he was to be guided by calculations formed on an extensive combination and comparison of circumstances. He thought, and thought most decidedly, that a reduction of our expenditure was called for by reflections of the most urgent and powerful kind; and he would feel it to be his duty, before he could agree to the continuance of any continental enterprises like those in which we were now engaged, to take a wide survey of our own resources, to measure their extent, and their application to the objects for the attainment or promotion of which they were proposed to be exerted. If the result of such an estimate were to establish any thing like a certainty of success in the schemes that were devised, all his hesitations and difficulties would be removed, and he should consider even the most extensive scale of foreign operations as recommended and supported by the principles of economy itself. He hoped too that he felt as warmly, and was as willing to acknowledge that feeling as any noble lord, the justice of that cause which we were maintaining in the peninsula. No cause related in the annals of mankind ever rested more entirely on sentiments of the most honourable feeling, or was more connected, if circumstances were favourable, with principles of national advantage. The spectacle exhibited was the most interesting that could engage the sympathies or the attention of the world, and it was impossible not to wish to afford assistance to the noble struggle of a free people against the most unparalleled treachery, the most atrocious violence, that ever stained or degraded the ambition of despotic power. If he could but calculate on the probability of supporting such a cause to a triumphant issue, there could remain no doubt but that the separation from France of such a country as Spain, containing her extent of territory and amount of population, would be to augment in a great degree our own national security. But those principles, on which the prosecution of that war could be defended, must be reduced to a mere speculative theory, unless supported by adequate exertions from the Spanish people and the Spanish government; without that necessary co-operation all our efforts must prove useless. With a view to those advantages, we had before contended in that very country against France, then

much less powerful than at present. He did not mean to say, that from these considerations, we were to withdraw our armies from the peninsula; but he thought that, before we proceeded further on the present expensive system, the House should have the distinct opinion of the commander-in-chief, as to the probable result of the operations, and enquire into the means of carrying on the contest by a more limited expenditure of our remaining resources. It would be his maxim to guard against endangering our own safety in the prosecution of remoter interests. These were his principles and his opinions; he had stated them distinctly, however assured at the same time, that he should to-morrow see them completely misrepresented.—He was desirous of adding a few words upon what had fallen from the noble lord who moved the amendment, respecting what he was pleased to call the complete success of our arms, during the last two years. For his own part, when he looked back to the events of that period, when he recollected the original objects of the war, and knew, as every other man knew, that the defence of Portugal must be impracticable after Spain should be entirely subdued, he could coincide in no such declaration. We had, unquestionably, achieved much; and in the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo he concurred in the admiration justly due to the vigour, celerity, and military skill so eminently displayed by the great commander who conducted that important enterprise. But when he looked to another part of that kingdom, and saw Badajoz in possession of the enemy—when he turned his attention to the operations in Catalonia—when he saw that, within the last two years, Tortosa, Lerida, Tarragona, Saguntum, had yielded—that Valencia had fallen—that the province of Murcia was over-run—he was at a loss to discover what new prospects of success had dawned upon the Spaniards. Those conquests opened to the enemy a free communication between all their divisions; and they would soon be enabled by that circumstance to bring the whole weight of their united forces against the British. He did think too that ministers had been culpably negligent, in not having exerted, in the quarter to which he had just adverted, the means actually in their power, by employing a considerable naval force, for the purpose of lending our allies more effectual succour. In Catalonia for instance, such a system, if properly conducted, would, in all probability, have enabled the warlike population of that province to expel their invaders. Where then were the symptoms of this boasted success? Lord Wellington, at the head of an army of 62,000 as effective men as were ever led into the field, had been compelled to remain on the defensive. With a force greater than that commanded by the Duke of Marlborough at the most splendid era of our military history, Lord Wellington had found himself limited to the pursuit of a defensive system. The country had been told, indeed, to look at the exertions of the Spanish Guerillas for a substitute to the assistance of regular troops, in which the nations of the peninsula were so deficient. On this he founded no great hopes, yet he was not able, from want of sufficient documents, to state precisely the weight which their assistance might have in the scale. But, momentous as all those objections were, in his opinion, against the present system of government, they sunk into insignificancy, when compared with one point on which he had to make a few observations; a point in his estimation of paramount importance. He alluded to the existence of an unseen and secret influence which lurked behind the throne.

An influence of this kind had too long prevailed, not less incompatible with the constitution, than with the best interests of the country. An influence of this odious character, leading to consequences the most pestilent and disgusting, it would be the duty of parliament to brand by some signal mark of condemnation. It was his rooted and unalterable principle, a principle in which those with whom he had the honour to act fully participated, not to accept of office without coming to an understanding with parliament for the abolition of this destructive influence; which consolidated abuses into a system, and by preventing complaints from reaching the royal ear, barred all hopes of redress of grievances. Holding these views and sentiments, he had thought it his duty to submit them to the House, and however various might be the opinions entertained of them, he had at least to congratulate himself on his own self-approbation. He had, however, the pride and satisfaction of reflecting that he still continued to enjoy the esteem of those friends for whom he felt the most sincere respect. All the arts and intrigue that had been attempted, in order to seduce many of those who had previously concurred with him on most of the great public questions of the day, had failed, except in one solitary instance, and that was scarcely worth notice. He trusted he had sufficiently explained the reasons by which he had been induced to sign the letter so frequently alluded to in the course of the debate; and with respect to his noble coadjutor in that proceeding, he must say of him, that the sentiments which that letter conveyed, were in strict conformity to the whole tenour of his noble friend's political life."

The motion was lost by a great majority; the ministers of the Prince Regent were confirmed in their stations with the approbation of parliament; and they pursued their measures with vigour and success, till they were deprived of their great and virtuous leader, by an event, in all its circumstances, unparalleled in English history.

On Monday the 11th of May, at about half-past five in the afternoon, as Mr Perceval was entering the lobby of the House of Commons, he was shot by a person of the name of Bellingham, who had taken his station by the door leading from the staircase. Immediately on receiving the ball, which entered his left breast, Mr Perceval staggered, and fell at the feet of a gentleman who was standing near the second pillar in the lobby. He uttered only a few words, which were but faintly articulated. He was soon recognised by the crowd of people whom the report of the pistol drew to the spot; his body was carried to the speaker's apartments; but before he reached them, all signs of life had vanished. The surgeon who had been sent for immediately arrived, and found that the ball, which was of an unusually large size, had penetrated the heart near its centre, and passed completely through it.—Amid the horror and dismay occasioned by this tragical event, no attempt was made for a few minutes to secure the assassin; but when a person at last exclaimed, "Where is the villain who fired!" Bellingham, who had remained unobserved, stepped up to him, and coolly said, "I am the unfortunate man." He had thrown away the pistol with which he had perpetrated the murder: he made no attempt, however, to escape, but at once resigned himself into the hands of the bye-standers, who placed him on a bench near the fire, and ordered the doors to be immediately shut. The prisoner having been searched, was conveyed to the bar of

the House of Commons, where he was recognised by General Gascoyne, one of the members for Liverpool, and after a few minutes conveyed to the prison-room belonging to the House of Commons. Magistrates having been sent for, an examination of witnesses took place, when it appeared, that the assassin had been often seen of late in the gallery of the House of Commons, and had on the day of the assassination been observing every member as he entered the lobby with great attention; circumstances, however, which at the time excited no suspicion. General Gascoyne stated that he had seen Bellingham often, and that he had received from him many petitions and memorials, respecting some claims on government, which were said to have originated in services performed by the assassin in Russia, for which he had obtained no remuneration. The assassin himself, when questioned on the subject, said, "My name is Bellingham—It is a private injury—I know what I have done—It was a denial of justice on the part of government." He added, that "he had for more than a fortnight watched for a favourable opportunity for effecting his purpose—that he had implored for justice in vain—that he had made application to every person likely to procure him redress, and that he had at length been driven to despair, by being told at the public offices that he might do his worst. I have obeyed them," said he, "I have done my worst, and I rejoice in the deed." The examination was concluded at about half past nine in the evening; the prisoner was ordered to Newgate; and the necessary steps were taken to prevent the possibility of his perpetrating suicide. He was conveyed to prison about one o'clock in the morning under an escort of dragoons.

The disastrous intelligence spread with amazing rapidity; and before six o'clock, the crowd collected in Palace-yard was immense. It was deemed prudent to order out the foot-guards, and city militia, as well as several bodies of volunteers, to preserve the peace of the metropolis. A cabinet council was summoned, and the departure of the post was delayed till dispatches could be made out, and instructions prepared for the civil and military authorities in different parts of the kingdom, particularly in the disturbed counties, that the public tranquillity might not be endangered. Never perhaps did there prevail so strong and universal a sensation of grief and horror.

A coroner's inquest was assembled next day; and after examining the body of Mr Perceval, and taking the evidence of witnesses, a verdict was brought in of wilful murder against Bellingham. It was now discovered that the assassin had not been assisted by accomplices; that the supposed injury which had led him to the perpetration of this horrid deed was of a private nature; and an opinion arose, which, for the honour of the national character, was gladly entertained, that he had been afflicted with insanity.—It was remarked, that this assassination had no parallel in the annals of the country. That neither the murder of the Duke of Buckingham, nor the attempt made on the life of the chancellor of the exchequer Harley, by the Frenchman Guiscard, the only instances in which the lives of ministers of state had been assailed, bore any resemblance to it. In both cases, the assassins had previous knowledge of, and believed they had been injured by, the objects of their vengeance, while it was unquestionable in this instance that Mr Perceval had not even heard of Bellingham's pretended claims on government. Although there was no reason to believe that in perpetrating the murder the assassin had been influenced by

political motives, it was generally remarked, that in one way at least, some recent political events might have had an influence on him. Insanity is powerfully wrought upon by external objects, and it is not improbable, therefore, that Bellingham, hearing of the assassinations in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, had instantly determined to commit a similar crime on the person of the prime minister.—A more than usually ferocious spirit seemed about this time to have taken possession of the public mind; for when the assassin was put into the carriage to be conveyed to Newgate, an attempt was made to rescue him. The soldiers were execrated as murderers; and even during a part of the following day, a mob collected in Palace Yard and the neighbourhood, and indulged in the most atrocious exclamations. In this state of popular turbulence it became important that the trial and punishment of the assassin should follow his crime with as much rapidity as possible; and as the sessions had already commenced at the Old Bailey, it was determined to bring Bellingham to trial on the Friday following.

When parliament met the next day, a message was sent down by the Prince Regent, intimating the wish of his royal highness that a suitable provision should be made for the family of Mr Perceval, who had fallen in the prime of life, and in the melancholy circumstances which have been related. A provision of 2000l. a-year to Mrs Perceval, and a grant of 50,000l. to her twelve children, (that is, about 200l. a-year to each) were proposed,—provisions which fell far short of what might have been expected from the generosity of the nation. The grant to the children was manifestly insufficient to educate them in the rank which they were entitled to hold in society. It was afterwards proposed, indeed, that the annuity to Mrs Perceval should descend to her eldest son; but even with this alteration, the provisions seem to have been very unworthy of the nation. No fairer case could have occurred for the display of national generosity than this, when a provision was to be made for the family of a man at the head of the administration of his country,—cut off in the discharge of his duty, and leaving his children to that nation in whose service he had lost his life. It is incredible that the provision should have been thus narrowed from an ungenerous wish to propitiate the populace, whose notions in matters of this kind are always mean and sordid. The grant ought to have been made by parliament on a scale of suitable magnificence. The family of Mr Perceval ought to have been distinguished by the liberality of the nation, and enabled to move with splendour in the highest sphere. Thus would the public gratitude have been expressed towards the memory of Mr Perceval; while the general feeling, as to the base act by which he had perished, would have been no less decidedly indicated.

Although it had been at first supposed that Bellingham was insane, from a belief that no other than a madman could have perpetrated a crime so horrid, many circumstances transpired, even before his trial, to prove that this suspicion was unfounded. Not only his manner at the time of committing the murder, but his conduct before and after it, discredited the supposition. He had transacted business with his solicitor, and other persons, within a week before the murder was committed, and nothing appeared in his conduct to raise a suspicion of insanity. He had since been much employed in writing; and there was nothing in his manner or his style to induce a belief that he had ever laboured under mental derangement. His letters, me-

morials, and petitions, all indicated that he was in perfect possession of his faculties; and nothing appeared to justify the belief of his insanity, except the very act for which he was to be tried.

His claim upon government was the most absurd that can well be imagined. He had gone to Archangel, and become a clerk in a mercantile house there; he formed a connection with a Russian merchant in the timber trade,—returned to England to seek a contract for the supply of timber, and entered into commercial engagements with the merchants of Hull. The Russian merchant with whom he had connected himself became bankrupt, and the timber was not supplied; the ships returned in ballast, and Bellingham was cast into prison. On recovering his liberty, he again proceeded to Archangel, entered into new speculations, which only increased his embarrassments; he became very troublesome to the Russian government, and behaved so ill, that he was at length thrown into prison, where he remained for some time. As soon as he was set at liberty he returned to England, where he made many complaints against the conduct of the Russian government. He continued at intervals to present memorials to the British government on the subject of his claims; but as the business was entirely of a private nature, the ministers could not interfere. No other symptoms of insanity, therefore, had hitherto appeared in him than the extreme insolence and selfishness with which he had contrived to molest the British and Russian governments, as to matters of private concern, in which they could not possibly take a part.

The day of his trial arrived, and as the circumstances of his case are of high interest and importance, from their connection with that great and lamented statesman of whose services the country had been deprived by the act of this ruffian, it may not be improper here to give a short sketch of what occurred during the course of the trial. The prisoner, in his defence, displayed a mind not wanting in rational faculties, but apt to draw conclusions, which were to serve as a justification of his conduct, from premises which could in no way support them. He discovered powers of mind which could discern all the tendencies of human actions, and estimate their several qualities, bewildered, however, by his passions, and powerfully stimulated by an acute sense of supposed injury. He considered himself as the judge of his own actions, and the avenger of his own wrongs. In his defence, he said, "I have sustained an injury from the Russian government; I have a right to redress,—my own country will not attend to my complaint; they dismiss it as either not understanding it, or setting their face against it;" and from such premises he concluded that he had a right to assassinate Mr Perceval. He admitted that he had no resentment against the minister—that he esteemed him, and lamented him as much as any of his relatives; yet he had certainly murdered this very man against whom he had no ground of complaint. There was ability, composition, and occasionally even eloquence, in his defence. In his language there was no involution; all was clear and unembarrassed, with the exception of occasional allusions which he made to the death of Mr Perceval, when he seemed to be deeply affected. It was impossible from his own statement to discover that he had received any injury from the Russian government; and it appeared from a letter written by Lord Grenville Leveson Gower to Lord Castlereagh, that the British ambassador at St Petersburgh, so far from having been inattentive to the applications of Bellingham,

had ceased to interfere only after he had been fully satisfied by the Russian authorities of the legality of the proceedings which had been instituted against the unhappy man.—There was no room for the plea of insanity; the evidence in support of such a plea must have been derived either from the character of the act itself by which Mr Perceval had fallen, or from the general conduct of the criminal. The act itself had no character of madness but what is common to all the excesses of the vindictive passions; and it appeared from the evidence that the general conduct of the criminal had been that of a sound and considerate man. Bellingham himself expressly disclaimed the plea of insanity which was proposed for him by his counsel, a plea which was manifestly inapplicable to his case. If there had been reason to believe that he did not understand whether murder is an innocent or prohibited act, whether wrong is right, or right wrong, or that on ordinary occasions he mistook good for evil, or evil for good, thus confounding the very elements of moral things, his case would have been very different; but Bellingham was not a creature of this kind; he had prosecuted redress and revenge for four years; he had uniformly acted with design and deliberation. To those who ask, whether the act for which he suffered was rational, it may be answered, that unfortunately the integrity of the understanding is not inconsistent with the greatest guilt, with the most unaccountable and extravagant wickedness. Experience proves that it is no evidence of an act having been done by an irrational creature that it contradicts the law of nature and the dictates of reason,—that it is without an adequate motive, and without a possible benefit. There could be no doubt, therefore, as to the manner in which this atrocious criminal ought to be disposed of; and the sentence of the law was accordingly pronounced against him without hesitation.

He had no sooner heard the awful sentence than he betrayed visible symptoms of agitation and dismay;—he seemed anxious to address the judge, but was of course prevented. When carried to his cell, he affected more calmness and composure; but he had no sooner fallen asleep than he began to start violently, like one labouring under the influence of a frightful dream. Yet every thing which he said or did still appeared rational, except that when Russia was mentioned, he became transported with passion, but without betraying any symptoms of derangement. He seemed anxious for the arrival of the day of execution; and, in the mean time, employed himself in making arrangements for his final separation from his friends. He exhibited some symptoms of a religious disposition, and occasionally moralized on the miseries and vicissitudes of human life. He persisted to the last in denying the criminality of his conduct.—Early in the morning which had been fixed for the execution of this unhappy man, large parties of the military were ordered out and stationed at convenient distances, to check any disposition to riot or disorder; but the state of the weather was such that the crowd was not so great as had been expected, and no confusion or violence ensued. Before the criminal was led out to the scaffold, the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, for the last time, interrogated him as to his motives for committing the crime for which he was about to suffer, and solemnly desired him to state whether he had been aided by accomplices. He answered, with great earnestness, that he had not; but still seemed insensible of the enormity of his crime. When he was led out to the scaffold, a faint cry was heard from the mob; but it did not

appear that he understood what they said, or was the least affected by their conduct. The sentence of the law was soon executed upon him; the crowd speedily began to disperse, and the tranquillity of the metropolis was re-established.

Thus perished, in the 50th year of his age, the Right Honourable Spencer Perceval; a man who was not more distinguished by the singular variety and extent of his talents, than by the possession of almost every public and private virtue. Descended of an ancient and honourable family, and discovering in his youth the marks of those high qualities which afterwards became so conspicuous, he was better entitled than most of his contemporaries to indulge the hopes of an honourable ambition, and to look forward to the most gratifying distinctions to which a great and vigorous mind can aspire. The state of his fortune, however, required that he should be educated to some profession; and he was accordingly called to the bar, where he rose to great eminence, and attained the highest reputation. The practice of the law, as a preparation for public life, has its advantages and inconveniences; while it invigorates some of the faculties, it has a tendency, perhaps, to narrow the range of the intellect, and is more propitious to acuteness of reasoning and brilliancy of wit, than to depth of understanding, comprehensiveness of views, and energy of character. Such, certainly, was the opinion of a great orator and statesman, who admitted, however, that there are men so happily born that they can triumph over the obstacles presented by the narrow habits of a professional life, to the full development of the highest qualifications of the mind.—Among the most distinguished of these exceptions, we may justly rank the late Mr Perceval, who, although brought almost immediately from the bar to the direction of the national councils in the most difficult times, displayed powers of mind fully adequate to his arduous duties. To the ascendancy of his genius his political antagonists were forced to submit; they submitted with reluctance and murmuring, it is true; but still they were compelled to yield to the voice of the nation which proclaimed his superiority.—The singular versatility of his talents had full employment even during the short period of his political career. He first came forward after the death of Mr Pitt, and during the short administration of the whigs, as a speaker on the side of opposition; his pointed wit and severe sarcasm rendered him useful to his friends, and formidable to his enemies. He was soon called to fill an office of high trust and power in the government, and was afterwards elevated, by the favour of his royal master, to the chief direction of the public councils. The talents for which he had become so remarkable in opposition were now of less service to him; but he had other and higher resources at command:—An easy and ready elocution,—a quickness and penetration almost unrivalled,—unwearied industry,—great powers of combination,—wisdom in planning, and resolution in executing the measures which he thought the most beneficial for his country, were among the eminent qualities which he displayed as chief minister. He had not been long in power when a great national calamity placed him in circumstances the most embarrassing, when he was called upon to propose measures in which his feelings as a man, and his sense of duty as a minister, were both put to severe trial, and when he had to expect from the past disappointment of his enemies and their newly-raised hopes, an opposition at once violent and formidable.—His conduct on this singular occasion, which so well reconciled the most de-

voted and respectful tenderness to his sovereign, with the most conscientious discharge of a great public duty,—which united the firmest and manliest perseverance in that course which the constitution of the country appeared to him to prescribe, with the utmost mildness and candour towards adversaries, who tried every method of disturbing the gentleness of his mind, will be long remembered with gratitude and admiration. With reference to these memorable transactions, it has been well remarked, by one who had a near view of his character, that "in the critical situation in which he stood, his enemies might have expected to find him timid, but they found him firm; weak, and he shewed them his strength; wavering, and he was faithful; off his guard, and he was never disconcerted; out of humour, and nothing could disturb the suavity of his manner; possessing a genius at once deep, solid, and extensive, aided by a penetration which let nothing escape; displaying a great legal knowledge, and a perfect comprehension of the magnitude and importance of the part he had to act, with an upright mind, and an inflexible determination to do his duty. Not for a moment did he lose sight of the interest of his sovereign; but although his opponents were strong, and the task he had to perform difficult, he confirmed and established the rights of the crown in such a manner as best supported its true dignity, secured the ease and comfort of the declining monarch, and satisfied the spirit and feelings of a great and generous nation. Yet his efforts presented no struggle; he was quick in reply, strong in argument, never embarrassed, but always taking the deepest and most comprehensive view of the subject in debate, and displaying as much firmness in support of the measures he adopted for the public safety, as talents and understanding to shew in what that safety consisted, foiling his antagonists, and often extorting from them an acknowledgment of those talents which so unequivocally established his character, and raised it to a level with that of the greatest men of this or any other age."

His enemies have acknowledged the vigour and penetration of his mind; but they have charged him with narrow and unphilosophical views,—illiberal maxims,—and ignorance of modern science. If by science they mean that barren system of metaphysical subtleties which has been so well applied by the professors of the present day to obscure the most obvious truths, which seeks to shelter impiety and crimes, while it would fain cast ridicule on the sentiments of virtue, which under pretence of liberality, would extinguish alike the ardour of patriotism and of piety; if this be what they mean by modern science, there can be no doubt that Mr Perceval despised it. It can be no reproach to him with those whose opinion can be of any value to his memory, that he neglected what the great Lord Chatham would have abhorred,—that he did not patronise the followers of a creed which Mr Pitt had spent his life in resisting.

But Mr Perceval, although uninitiated in the mysteries of modern philosophy, was well skilled in the principles which were professed by the greatest of his predecessors; he knew the constitution of his country, and he was determined to preserve it unimpaired. He sincerely and ardently loved his native land; he knew that with all her imperfections, England was still the great model of political excellence, and he needed not the aids of a shallow and presumptuous philosophy to tell him, that she possessed energies in herself which would yet enable her to take vengeance for the crimes of her neighbours. In his determination to persevere in the mighty

contest which he had to conduct for the liberties of the world, he was firm but not arrogant,—calm and considerate,—seldom betrayed into boasting, but never sinking into despondency. He saw that the unhappy circumstances of Europe would compel England to become for a time a great military nation; but he was also aware that so serious a change must, in the present state of society, be attempted with caution, and with as small a deduction as possible from the comforts of civil life. He knew that the British army under its illustrious commander, must on all occasions cover itself with glory; that discipline and experience would add to its triumphs, and diffuse a military spirit throughout the nation; and that the application of the resources of the country to the prosecution of the war, could never be difficult, when seconded by the enthusiasm of the people. In the oppressed state of the continent,—in the personal character of the chief who had usurped a controul over its destinies, his penetration discovered the chances of that general spirit of resistance which was afterwards to re-establish the independence and secure the repose of Europe.

The measures of commercial violence to which the enemy resorted, were answered by Mr Perceval with the same firmness which he displayed on all other occasions; and notwithstanding the clamour which was raised on this subject, posterity will perhaps discover no other fault in the measures adopted by this great man, than that they were of a character somewhat above the feelings and temper of the age in which he lived. That the orders in council produced commercial distress, although to a much less degree than has been generally supposed, may be admitted by the admirers of this eminent person, without detracting in any way from his reputation. Let it be recollected, however, that the measures were *unquestionably just*; that they had been provoked by the lawless violence of the enemy; that neutrals, by acquiescence, had made themselves parties to the outrage, and that it concerned the national honour (a point which is dearer than all others to a virtuous and high-minded man,) to repel the aggression. A portion of the community was, no doubt, exposed to severe suffering; and some of the lower orders not only made violent complaints, but proceeded to acts little short of rebellion. The people of Rome, in the most dreadful extremity of the republic, would not have acted thus when the question was about avenging the insults of an enemy; and perhaps it would be well, not for the memory of Mr Perceval, but for the national character, if a veil could be drawn over these disgraceful scenes.

Even the more respectable advocates of catholic emancipation may have been induced by recent events to applaud the sagacity of this great minister, who at all times shewed a firm resolution to concede nothing to violence and disaffection. Those who imagined that in the refusal of Mr Perceval at once to concede the catholic claims, they had found an apology for the bitterest reproaches, may be somewhat more moderate in their censures when they reflect, that the impolicy of his views on this subject has never yet been proved by the only unerring test in political affairs,—the test of experience.

If Mr Perceval's public virtues commanded the admiration of his country, his private character secured him the love of all who had the happiness of knowing him.—Mild, affable, sincere, a tender husband, an affectionate parent, a kind and faithful friend, it may, perhaps, with more truth be said of him than of any other great name in history, that he possess-

ed all the virtues which are at once the ornament and solace of private life.—Never, perhaps, was there so rare an union of the qualities which inspire respect, with those which create affection for the individual; and it was the singular fortune of this great and good man, that his enemies vied with his friends in the panegyrics which they pronounced on his spotless and amiable character.

CHAP. VI.

State of the Administration after the Death of Mr Perceval. Mr Stuart Wortley's Motion in the House of Commons for an Address to the Prince Regent on this Subject. The Prince entrusts the Marquis Wellesley with Powers to form a new Administration. Publication of the Statement of the Causes which had induced the Marquis to retire from Office. Failure of the Negociation, and Resignation by Marquis Wellesley of his Powers. Discussions in Parliament on this Subject. Lord Moira is entrusted with Powers to form an Administration, but fails. Debates and Explanations in Parliament. The Colleagues of the late Mr Perceval are confirmed in Power.

THE death of Mr Perceval threw the country into the utmost consternation; and as a very high opinion was entertained of his talents, a belief prevailed that his colleagues could not, without some accession of strength, continue to conduct the affairs of government. That this opinion was ill-founded subsequent events have very clearly demonstrated; but the ministers themselves, whether from a feeling of modesty, which is not always a proof of slender talent, or from a wish to gratify the supposed inclinations of the people, seemed anxiously to desire that accession of strength of which they were believed to stand in need.

In fixing on the quarter to which they should apply for assistance, they could not long hesitate; with the leaders of opposition, who had declared so lately, that they differed with ministers on every point of policy, it was impossible that they could coalesce, and their views were too sincere and honourable to permit them to make an attempt, which they knew well must have proved unsuccessful. They naturally looked for support, therefore, to some men of distinguished abilities who had once formed part of the administration; and who, although removed by untoward circumstances, still maintained a general conformity of political sentiments. Overtures were accordingly made by Lord Liverpool to Marquis Wellesley and Mr Canning; and the terms proposed by him were such as the honour of both parties demanded. He stated, in his communication to them, that the Prince Regent, although determined to continue his administration on its present basis, was desirous of strengthening it by the aid of such persons as agreed most nearly and generally in the principles on which public affairs had been conducted; that, with this view, his royal highness naturally looked to Lord Wellesley and Mr Canning; that the arrangements should be made honourable and satisfactory to them; that the friends of both should be included; and that while he (Lord Liverpool) should be placed at the head of the treasury, Lord Castlereagh should retain the situation which he then held, both in the government and

in the House of Commons.—Questions were immediately put by Lord Wellesley and Mr Canning as to the opinions of the ministers respecting the catholic question and the war in the peninsula. Lord Liverpool answered, that the opinions of the cabinet on these subjects remained unaltered; that the ministers were not aware of any means by which they could extend the scale of warlike operations, but that it was the wish of the government to make the greatest efforts in the cause of Spain which the resources of the country would permit. He added, that the members of the cabinet were, with a few exceptions, to remain; that the distribution of offices should be left open for future arrangement, and be regulated for the honour of all parties; and that no principle of exclusion was intended, although it had not been thought fit to make any direct proposal to the members of opposition.—Lord Wellesley took an opportunity in the course of these communications of expressing an earnest desire to be relieved from the task of leading, as it is called, in the House of Lords; and he declared, that although no engagement subsisted betwixt him and Mr Canning, he would not, under the present circumstances, accept of office, unless a fair proposal were made to that gentleman.—The result of this first effort, and of the mutual explanations which ensued, was, that Lord Wellesley and Mr Canning both positively declined to form part of the administration, assigning as their reason, the avowed sentiments of ministers on the catholic question. Lord Wellesley added, that the considerations which had induced him to resign in the month of February last, had acquired additional force since that time, and would present an insuperable obstacle to his acceptance of any situation in the ministry. He complained, that while Mr Perceval lived his opinions had not been allowed sufficient weight in the cabinet; that his sentiments had always been in favour of more extended operations in the peninsula; and that although Lord Liverpool had alluded to recent circumstances which might render it practicable to comply so far with his views, he saw no reason to believe that they would be well executed by the ministers. He expressed a firm conviction, also, that no administration adequate to the crisis could be formed without admitting some of those persons commonly designated as the opposition, whose accession to power would alone satisfy the wishes of the country. That it appeared to him from the recent deliberations of parliament, that such an union was still practicable; that a cabinet might be formed "on an intermediary principle respecting the Roman catholic claims," equally secured against the dangers of instant and unqualified concession and those of inconsiderate peremptory exclusion; and that the entire resources of the empire might be applied to the great objects of the war, with the general consent, on a full understanding of the real exigencies of the crisis; while concord and union at home would secure ultimate and permanent success abroad.

Lord Liverpool having been dissatisfied with the interpretation which had been put upon his sentiments as to the catholic question in Lord Wellesley's answer, addressed to him an explanatory letter, in which he solemnly protested against the inference, that it was or ever had been his opinion, that under no circumstances it would be possible to make any alteration on the laws respecting the Roman catholics. He added, that he had expressly declared his sentiments to this effect in parliament. But the state of the opinions and feelings of the Roman catholics at this time, rendered it, in his judgment, dangerous to take any

steps; and, in such circumstances, he had thought it right to resist any parliamentary proceeding on the subject, which could produce nothing but alarm among the protestants on the one hand, and delusive hopes among the catholics on the other. This explanation, however, produced no effect on the Marquis Wellesley, who still maintained, that his interpretation of Lord Liverpool's sentiments had been correct, since no indication had been given as to the time or circumstances in which any alteration of the system of policy pursued towards the catholics could be expected, while the very consideration of the question was denied to parliament, and not permitted to any other authority. He considered the sentiments of the ministers on the catholic question to be perfectly pure and honest; but while he gave them credit for sincerity, he lamented the erroneous foundation and dangerous tendency of their opinions. He concluded, by declaring that his objections to the system pursued in the peninsula at the time of his resignation applied to the whole of our permanent arrangements, both in Portugal and Spain, which, in his opinion, should have been corrected and extended, not only with a view to the advantageous use of such means as were then possessed in that quarter, but even of such extraneous aids as events in other quarters might place at the disposal of government. The discussion here terminated; and the Marquis Wellesley and Mr Canning persisted in their refusal to support the administration.

The progress of this negociation soon became known to the public; and as a strong desire was felt to see the administration settled on a proper basis, a motion was brought forward in the House of Commons by Mr Stuart Wortley, that an address should be presented to his royal highness the Prince Regent, praying that he would be pleased to take such measures as might enable him, in the circumstances of the country, to form a strong and efficient government. The grounds upon which this interference of parliament with the royal prerogative was justified, were the following:—That an administration was about to be formed which no disinterested man thought adequate to the exigencies of the times; that it was better at once to resist the formation of such a ministry, than to look on while the arrangements were going forward, and afterwards to commence a systematic opposition to it; that a distinct intimation of public opinion might at once lead to the formation of a government in which the country could place confidence; that the motion did not pledge parliament to the support of all the measures of any government how efficient soever, but that, at this crisis of affairs, an efficient government, possessing the full confidence of the people, was absolutely required; that the government, as it stood, did not possess that confidence; and that all had not been yet done to form an efficient administration; That the offers already made to the Marquis Wellesley and Mr Canning had been perfectly inadmissible; that it was idle to attempt to form a strong administration, unless something were proposed to conciliate the catholics; and that the abandonment of that great question ought never to have been proposed as a preliminary condition; That it was an object of the highest importance, in the state of public affairs, to have a government formed on a liberal basis, calculated to comprehend the talents and influence of the country, and to promote its security and honour; That the motion before the House involved no unconstitutional interference with the prerogative of the crown; that it is not only the pro-

vince and right, but the absolute and bounden duty of the House of Commons to interfere when it discovers that measures are about to be adopted, or an administration about to be formed, which has no chance of meeting the wishes or enjoying the confidence of the people; that the ministers themselves entertained a due sense of their own incapacity, since they had attempted to enlist under their banners, men whose talents they thought might sustain the tottering fabric of their administration; but the proposal had been honourably declined, not from personal motives, but on public grounds; That the ministers, in making their late attempt to acquire an accession of strength, had desired nothing more than a pretence for their own continuance in power, since they foresaw the odium which they must have encountered had they presumed to remain in office without some endeavour to strengthen themselves by the most efficient aid; That there could be no reason for waiting till experience had decided on the incapacity of the administration; that the crisis demanded a government which could do something by authority—an administration of some name and credit to give it strength in the public opinion; That even those who approved of the present system ought to consider, whether the present men were capable of supporting it; yet what must be the nature of that system, to which there was so general a repugnance, that all the arts and blandishments of the court could not secure for it any support but that of the present ministers? That, with reference to the catholic claims, an administration was required which could talk in a firm tone to the Irish people, conceding what could be safely yielded, and resisting all unreasonable demands; and, finally, that the House was called on by the motion to decide, whether it should ever advise the crown on such an occasion, or whether it would surrender one of its most important privileges, and agree to support an administration formed on a principle of mere favouritism.

The motion was resisted on various grounds.—It is unconstitutional, said its opponents, to interfere with the prerogative of the crown in forming an administration; and there is no instance on record of the House having thus interfered; That it would be time enough to propose censure when an administration had been formed and found inefficient; but it was altogether unbecoming and arrogant to offer previous advice; That although it be the unquestionable duty of the House of Commons to watch over and controul the crown, no constitutional principle is better understood, than that the sovereign has the absolute right of nominating his ministers. That although some persons of great talents had declined to accept of office under government, their refusal could be no reproach to the existing administration; that it must at all times be of importance to unite as great a share of the talents and influence of the country as possible in the government; but although a fair and honourable attempt had, in this instance, been made with that view, yet the attempt had failed, because ministers were not disposed to concede opinions for which they had already received the sanction of parliament and of the country; That administrations prematurely denounced as weak and inefficient, had, on many occasions, conducted the affairs of the country with activity and vigour, while others, with great promise of talents, energy, and weight, had disappointed every expectation which had been formed of them; That the history of all countries, and the opinions of the wisest men, concur in establishing this salutary truth,—

that it is far better to adhere to the principles of the constitution on all occasions, than to violate them for the sake of a temporary advantage. It is more manly and spirited, said the supporters of the motion, to bring the question forward while the arrangement are depending, than to wait till they are concluded, and then commence hostilities; but to this an answer might be made in the words of Junius to Sir William Draper—"That this was an instance of spirit; and if it had been an instance of any thing but spirit, he would have been inclined to follow the example;" That the question, whether the House should have a controul on the appointment of the ministers of the crown had been decided thirty years ago; and it had been wisely held, that it is only when parliament has had experience of the measures of ministers, that it is entitled to address the throne, and express a decided opinion. Such were the old-fashioned principles of the constitution under which the country had long flourished; and by these principles it would be expedient still to abide.

Such were the arguments of a general nature which were urged on this occasion. In the course of the debate, Mr Ryder made some allusions to the details of the late negociation, which drew from Mr Canning an oration, replete with his usual eloquence and ability. Mr Ryder observed, that "if the House agreed to the motion at this moment, they would violate one of the first and most undoubted prerogatives of the crown. He had expected that his honourable friend (Mr S. Wortley) would have been prepared to shew some precedent; but the fact he really believed was, that there was no instance in our history where the House interfered to prevent the formation of an administration. His honourable friend predicted, from what he knew of the present government, that the administration, which was not yet nominated, would be one not entitled to the confidence of the country.—The only similar instance alluded to was the case of Mr Pitt, and on that occasion his great political rival had made an apology for bringing forward a motion not of advice with respect to the formation of a ministry, but to prevent the dissolution of parliament, in the interval previous to the re-appointment of Mr Pitt, thus acknowledging the unconstitutionality of an interference with the appointment of ministers. The period he alluded to was one of unprecedented heat and irritation, when the House shewed a disposition to go lengths in opposition to ministers, which he believed many of them had since been disposed to allow were unjustifiable; yet neither Mr Fox nor any of the great men of that day ventured to avow such motives as those declared by his honourable friend on the present occasion.—What was the case then? The reasons for interference then were much stronger than those which could now be alleged. The crown had dismissed a ministry which had great majorities on its side; and the crown did so, in order to appoint another ministry which had not the confidence of the House.—He would be glad to know who were the persons that were to compose the ministry about to be formed? Were they not those who, for the last four years, had been receiving the approbation of parliament and of his honourable friend? Was not the noble lord at the head of the administration (the Earl of Liverpool) the same person who had been so long successfully conducting that part of the affairs of the country, which on so many occasions had experienced the approbation of the House and of the public? This was enough to shew that the grounds of proceeding in the one case and the other were totally different.—And yet it

was under these circumstances conceived against all precedent and principle, that the House should go up to the throne for the purpose of advising the king as to the choice of his servants.—He here found it necessary to allude to some facts which were pretty generally known; and in doing so, he could not be suspected of any private motive, for, without going into the circumstances connected with that event, he had to state, that he was no longer a member of the administration. The manner in which certain propositions had been made, had been animadverted on that night, but he did not think that his right honourable friend (Mr Canning) would say, that those offers were not made in perfect sincerity, and in the wish and hope that they would be accepted. As far as related to the motion of which his right honourable friend had given notice—(Mr Canning's notice relative to the catholic question for the 28th of this month)—he apprehended that if he had accepted office, the necessity for bringing forward that motion would have been superseded, because it would then have been in his power to direct the attention of his colleagues to the subject in a more efficacious manner. But he understood there were other grounds for the refusal of his right honourable friend, among which was the treating the catholic claims as a government question. Whether his right honourable friend would have persisted in this new view of the subject he knew not; if he did, it would indeed have proved a bar to his right honourable friend's admission into the present ministry. He knew that it excited extreme concern on the part of government to find, that his right honourable friend could not be brought to strengthen their administration. With respect to the opinions held on the principal topics at issue, he had papers which fully explained them, but which, at this moment, he did not feel himself authorised to produce, and he asked his right honourable friend whether he had not seen such a statement? To recur to the subject of the motion, he could see no ground for supposing any inability in the noble lord at the head of the government; for that noble lord was the man, who, ten or eleven years ago, had been characterised by Mr Pitt as the individual most fit to succeed to the first office in the government, from his talents, integrity, and extensive acquirements, with the sole exception of Mr Fox. As to the motion now before the House, he could not conceive how his honourable friend could reconcile it with the votes which he had been accustomed to give. He felt little disposed to enter into any political contention, or to say any thing that could give offence, but he could not help referring the House to the principles that had governed, and to the practice that had been pursued for four years by the last administration, and to the majorities by which its measures had been supported, and asking whether it could be imagined, that members would be acting a part agreeable to their constituents, by adopting the motion proposed for the purpose of destroying a government, which had hitherto received the highest approbation throughout the country? Had he no other objections to the motion, this alone would be sufficient to determine his vote; he could not believe it possible, that it could now be carried by a majority of the House, unless they were prepared to say, that all those measures which had been hitherto approved, as essential to the glory and security of the empire, were in reality detrimental to its best and truest interests."

Mr Canning now rose and said,—"It was my wish and my intention to have avoided troubling the House in the

course of the present debate; not because I might presumptuously suppose, that in the motion for an address, for a strong and efficient administration, there was any thing personally reflecting upon myself, founded on transactions which owe their birth to the few last days, but because I was aware, that whatever I might urge upon the subject would naturally be attributed to personal feelings, which I can assure the House it has been my most earnest endeavour to dismiss, on the subject of the application which has recently been made to me. The speech, however, of my right honourable friend who has just taken his seat, has placed me in a situation, in which, if I did not answer the call he has made upon me, I might be justly accused, in the first place, of disrespect towards him, which is far from my intention; and in the second, of disrespect to the House, which is equally distant from my mind. He will allow me to say, without any sentiment of unkindness, that I think the call has been made a little unfairly.—Whatever has passed verbally without these walls, by an absolute agreement between Lord Liverpool, who made the proposition, and myself, was reduced to writing, that it might be less subject to misapprehension, or perversion, and to that minute, an answer upon paper was returned by me, to which, standing at the bar of my country to answer for my conduct, I beg leave to refer—I know that here I cannot technically refer to it, and I know that thus a technical advantage may be taken—an unworthy advantage may be taken—and when the honourable member for Yorkshire tells me that the House can have no cognizance of such correspondence, I acknowledge that it is perfectly true, and I cannot help wishing that my honourable friend (Mr Ryder) who spoke on the same side, had availed himself of the useful precept which was thus afforded. What I complain of is, that he has travelled out of the record, which, by special contract between the parties, was allowed to comprise the whole case.—He has gone beyond the written proposal and my written answer. I am sorry that he has done so, because he has put me under the unavoidable, but disagreeable necessity of doing what was farthest from my intention, when I entered this House, and what is in direct opposition to all my feelings; viz. drawing a contrast between my own conduct and that of others for my own vindication.

"I have been asked whether, supposing I had accepted the offer that was made to me, I should not have felt myself at perfect liberty to act as my own opinions should dictate upon the great question which constitutes the main bar of separation? I reply that, as a minister, I know I should have been at liberty: I do not mean to assert, that if I had joined the present administration to fight against my own principles, under the banners of the noble lord, I should not still have had the power of making my solitary speech, and of giving my solitary vote, in support of opinions I had previously maintained—I will not even say, that there may not be honourable minds who would be satisfied with such a distinction, and it may be my misfortune or my fault that mine is not a mind of that construction. If, when out of office, I have lent to any cause that I deemed just my influence and my authority, I never can consent to accept office under the condition that I shall instantly divest myself of that influence and authority which ought still to be my companions, and to leave them on one great and vital question in open and wilful abeyance. I beg the House to observe, that these painful explanations are extorted from me:

I could refer them to the cool, deliberate compositions of my closet, but I am compelled here to stand forward while they are wrung from me by the unfair conduct of a debate. I am most unwillingly placed in the situation I now occupy, and obliged for my own justification to appear to throw imputations upon others.

"I perfectly concur in the general doctrine laid down, that it is the exclusive prerogative of the crown to nominate its own ministers: I admit that the case must be urgent indeed to authorise the interference of the House; but I cannot forget that parliament has a double character. The House of Commons is a council of controul, but it is likewise a council of advice, and I think the man ill-read, not in your journals, but in our constitution, who should say that no case of such transcendant importance could exist, in which it would not be competent for the legislature, by the timely interposition of advice, to prevent the necessity of controul.—The right honourable gentleman who spoke last, has resorted to a very dangerous species of argument, even when most dexterously handled, by attempting to shew the absurdity of one thing, by exemplification and comparison with another. His reference was made with peculiar infelicity.

"In 1784, he says, times of peculiar turbulence, the House never thought of interfering with the crown in the appointment of its servants. Though triumphant majorities were headed by transcendant talents, so high and extravagant a flight as interposition in the nomination of ministers was never contemplated, but to keep within the bounds of the constitution, parliament addressed the sovereign for the continuance of their own existence! If the proposition of this night had been as it was in 1784 to address the crown against a dissolution, then indeed it might with some plausibility have been urged that the House was advancing a step too far—then indeed the right honourable gentleman might exclaim, that the great land-marks of the constitution were thrown down; that the king was deprived of his controuling power, and that the House of Commons was erecting itself into the tyrant of the realm, instead of remaining merely the representatives of the people. While I am thus arguing in favour of the motion of the honourable gentleman, the House and he will allow me to state that I utterly disclaim any privity to his intention of submitting it. I can truly assert that no man admires his vigour and independence more than myself, and there is no man whom I should be more proud to call my friend; but standing in the situations which we respectively hold, if I were to have indulged a conjecture on the subject, and were to have considered who would have been the first to have brought forward a motion of censure upon my conduct, I should have named that honourable member; and if the House is taken by surprise, I can, with the utmost sincerity, assert, that its astonishment at the nature of the motion, and at the quarter in which it originates, is not equal to my own.

"In the early part of the debate, the honourable gentleman who moved that the other orders of the day be read, made an allusion which was liable to some misapprehension.—I wish, however, previously to say a word or two upon the nature of his amendment.—What, sir, are we come to this? How is an unprecedented motion, shaking the very foundations of the throne—aiming a deadly blow at the prerogative of the crown, inverting the march of the constituent powers of the state, met by the administration? By an amendment, proposing the reading of the other orders of the

day. They do not come forward boldly maintaining the principles of the constitution, demanding that such an unheard-of motion shall be deliberately investigated with closed doors, and exclaiming, 'Down with the audacious innovator!'—but they content themselves with very simply moving the orders of the day! This too, be it never forgotten, by a government which calls upon the House and the country, to declare that they are strong, efficient, and fully competent to conduct the arduous duties of the state, in these most arduous times. This specimen, I think, will be allowed to be a fair indication of what we may hereafter expect from their boasted ability and vigour. The allusion which I noticed as being liable to misconstruction, was made in the early part of the speech of the mover of this celebrated amendment, where he stated that I had demanded some concessions of principle as the price of my acceptance of office. To refute this assertion, I beg leave to refer him and the House to my recorded opinion. I merely enquired of Lord Liverpool, as a matter of information, whether the policy and sentiments of his colleagues continued the same, and I was answered by my noble friend with the candour and manliness that have distinguished him in every part of these transactions, as well as through life, that his own opinions upon this grand topic remained unchanged, and he was not aware that those of his colleagues had undergone any alteration. I here once more protest, and protest complainingly, that I have thus been dragged into a reconsideration of the subject, and I hope the House will not forget that I have been far from seeking the occasion. When I was thus informed of the settled and confirmed opinions of the head of the government, honoured with the chief confidence of the sovereign, and possessing all the influence and authority which that ostensible situation affords, could I doubt for an instant their practical effect on the other members of the cabinet? Could I hesitate as to their operation upon any attempt at a practical proceeding? My right honourable friend tells me, that if I would have consented to have formed a part of the administration to be established, the motion of which I have given notice would have been wholly unnecessary, as I should then have had an opportunity of calling the attention of my colleagues to the subject. I would ask any rational being what would have been the probable—the certain result? I should have moved it in the cabinet to be beaten there, instead of moving it in the Commons to be beaten here; I consider myself bound rather to move it here, and to be beaten here, and for this obvious reason, that it may appear to the public that the pledge I gave has not been forfeited, and that I have used my best exertions to carry my object into execution. I have never stated an opinion, nor do I hold it, that concessions to the catholics, unrestricted, unqualified, and precipitate, would be either politic or just.—Other honourable men may entertain conscientiously different sentiments, but I am bound only by my own, and those have always been uttered in one direction.

"When my right honourable friend spoke of opinions that I had recently adopted, I apprehend he cannot mean to state that they are such as I have not long held, and such as he has known that I have long held. He says they are recently adopted—I say I have not recently adopted them, I have ever entertained them; but I have often avowed in this House, that on a fair comparison of conflicting duties, while the third branch of the constitution was hostile to the measure, I thought it better for the country, bet-

ter for the cause, better for Ireland, and better for the catholics themselves, that I should raise my feeble shield between the crown and the question. I felt it my duty at that period not to hazard the peace of the empire, and the peace of mind of a venerable sovereign. I maintain then, that the right honourable gentleman has no right to say that these opinions with me are of recent adoption. It is, however, a little too much to expect, that what I then yielded to the conscience of a sovereign, I should now yield to the convenience of a minister. For my conduct on this subject I have long laboured under misconstruction and obloquy, and I protest that I would have suffered under it with patience to the last hour of my life, rather than have sown with thorns the pillow of my sovereign. It is, however, rather an unreasonable expectation, that I should approve of the policy of a minister because I had submitted to the irremoveable conscience of a king. I should not have been more scrupulous with regard to the sentiments of my late much-lamented friend, and shall I now submit to the prejudices of an individual who has succeeded him at the head of affairs, and whose opinions nearly, though not perhaps entirely, coincide with those of the right honourable gentleman now no more? Personal objections to the noble lord, I declare I have none; I am actuated by no feeling of rivalry, and with this particular question excepted, I could have no earthly hesitation either in acting with, or under him; but I cannot allow, that the predominance of his opinion shall stifle mine. I cannot enter the cabinet, pretending not to know that the influence of the noble lord will be such as to paralyze all my feeble efforts there.

"But do I therefore demand concessions to my opinions? None! all I ask is, that the subject shall be fairly and deliberately considered, with a view to the arrival at some practical conclusion, and that it should be investigated where alone it can be done with the hope of a favourable result, in the cabinet. My desire was, not to obtain concessions, but to ascertain to what extent conscientious men in the discharge of a public trust would go; it was to this consummation that my anxiety was directed; I required only that the important topic should be considered; the question demands it, you ought to give it, and I will add, that ere long you must give it. As another opportunity will shortly be afforded me of more minute explanation, I have not now attempted more than to free myself from the misrepresentations of which the honourable mover, I am certain, and my right honourable friend, I hope, were unintentionally guilty. My right honourable friend has put to me a most unfair question, but since it has been proposed I will answer it. He enquires whether I have not seen a statement of the opinions entertained by the cabinet upon the subject of the catholic claims? I have seen it. I do not like to speak in disrespectful terms of any paper evidently the production of great labour and study, but I am compelled to notice it, for here, again, I would entreat the House to bear in mind that I have not courted this discussion. I admit that the abolition of the Jesuits completely exonerates that order from the charge of having drawn up this document, but such an extraordinary pledge of what a cabinet intended to do I never saw. Not two of the members agreed in opinion, and I thought that it would be little consolation that another individual should enter the cabinet with yet another shade of difference. I imagined, before I obtained a sight of the document referred to, that it comprised all the philosophical principles combined, that all the lights of abstract reasoning and profound theology were there.

concentrated to a point, but, after perusing it with the utmost attention, I returned it with a note, written in perfect good humour, stating, that as far as I had been able to make it out, it appeared to me to be of a controversial nature.—Such was the answer, which, in perfect simplicity of heart, I returned yesterday; I really did not know what other answer to give; but to what did this statement amount? Practically to this, as far as I could comprehend it; but, indeed, it is unfair to impute to the cabinet any opinion, because, collectively, it has none, and the retrospective influence upon my mind (for I did not see this curious production until after the negociation had been closed,) was, that if I had joined this *hortus siccus* of dissent, as Mr Burke once termed it, we should have formed as beautiful a variety as was ever assembled in so small a collection. But amidst such unprecedented differences, on which side is the influence and authority of government enlisted? That is the main question; this man may hold a blue opinion, another a white, a third a green, a fourth a yellow, and a fifth a red, but with which of these shades does the sentiment of government most nearly accord? Undoubtedly this point will be decided by the individual, who, holding the principal office, pre-eminently enjoys the confidence of the occupant of the throne, and the additional weight he adds to the scale must overbalance the remainder. I could not, therefore, feel that I entered the cabinet with honour, if I consented to give there a mere barren solitary vote.' I trust, although not very fairly put upon my trial, that my conduct is completely justified in the eyes of the House and of the country.

"To all that has been said regarding the mode in which the overtures were made, I most heartily subscribe; and no man can pronounce a panegyric upon the demeanour of my noble friend, which I will not cheerfully second: I have known him for nearly twenty years, and during that period the warmth of my friendship has progressively augmented. I cast no slur upon the motives that influenced him or his colleagues; I believe, nay, I am convinced, that they conscientiously entertain different sentiments. Here I beg, once for all, to state, that the point on which we differ is this—not, as has been constantly and studiously misrepresented, whether we shall instantly concede, but whether, in the present temper of the times, in the present state of Europe, in the present convulsions of the world; at a period when the public mind is in a ferment, when you cannot dispose of the subject with a wish, or strangle it with a hair, and when you are not able to set it at rest by the strong arm of power, the government should not do that which is best in my opinion, and next best in the opinion of the present servants of the crown,—allow the question to come before the cabinet for decision. Thus would the public anxiety be allayed, and those repeated annual discussions, fruitless of any thing but evil, be once for all concluded. In affirming that the Roman Catholic claims should not now be agitated, ministers beg the whole question. I do not say that immediate concessions should be made; all I claim is, that this body of people should be sheltered under the protecting wing of the legislature: that their case should be placed in the hands, or in the portfolio of the executive government. By those means, and those only, can you ensure to Ireland a happy and peaceful summer, and to the empire, confiding and lasting tranquillity.

"When my honourable friend opposite, (the member for Yorkshire,) asserts that measures and not men were

to be the main topic of consideration and animadversion, he seems to have forgotten that I, one of the principal actors in the scene which has lately been displayed, have been imperiously called upon for a justification of my conduct,—he does not recollect that even my reputation is at stake. He, of all others, is the one who would pay most attention to individual character; he will not deny that if you deprive the present race of pigmy men of reputation, you destroy almost every claim they possess to the gratitude of the nation, and make them unworthy of the country in which they were born. On my part, I can assert with the most perfect sincerity, that no disposition has been shewn by me to decline sustaining my share of the burden of the state in these perilous times. My anxiety has been to make them less perilous, but upon this great question I have seen not only no desire to grant any thing to the catholics, but not even a disposition that an enquiry should be instituted. The noble lord seems by his gestures to express dissent from my statement. I am happy to remark it, and if within the last eight and forty hours, any change of opinion should have taken place; if the various shades of sentiment have been amalgamated into one general and pleasing tone; if it is now thought that the question ought to be considered, I do not desire to take advantage of it by accepting any place, being myself out of the question, but although out of office, I shall hail this alteration of opinion with a joy as sincere as if I possessed a seat in the cabinet."

The speech of Mr Canning drew from Lord Castlereagh the following remarks on this momentous question. He admitted, "that according to the constitution, parliament had a right to address the crown on urgent and important occasions, to prevent the execution of measures that were deemed by the House injurious to the welfare of the state. Before, however, a step were taken upon ground so seldom trodden, it would be well to examine its firmness and solidity, and to consider maturely whether the causes which induced it were adequate to the effect. He approved highly of the manner in which this motion had been met by the amendment for passing to the order of the day, since the direct negative might have been subject to serious misconstruction. The right distinction had been taken, when it was said, that the House was not by circumstances justified at this moment to interfere, not that it ought not to interpose at all. As a general admission he was ready to agree, that at no period of our history was it more necessary that a government should be formed of the united talent and honour of the nation; at no period was it more necessary that a strong and efficient administration should be selected, that their combined efforts might tend to the salvation of the state in these times of peculiar danger. He submitted, that in the proposal made to Lord Wellesley, and his right honourable friend, the crown had acted from the dictates of a sound discretion, and if with honour the offer could not be accepted, it was the duty of those to whom it was suggested to reject it. He lamented that the honourable mover had not thought it right to declare more explicitly what, in his view, the crown had attempted, and what it ought to have done. The right honourable gentleman who spoke last had noticed one great question, on which differences of opinion prevailed, and he seemed to have forgotten all other matters in dispute, some of which were of scarcely less magnitude; even upon that solitary subject he had not favoured the House with one practical idea, or with one reason

why the sentiments of so many others should yield to his opinion. Before the House voted by a concurrence with the motion, that the sovereign had not done all in his power to attain the desired object, it would be fit to enquire, whether nothing stood between the crown and the formation of the government, so much desired by all parties. For himself and his colleagues, he asserted, that they had interposed no obstacles. If, however, they had sought to shelter themselves from the pelting of the supposed storm, gathered by their measures, by a voluntary retirement, animadversion might have been justly bestowed; if they had given the pusillanimous advice, that because the hand of an assassin had deprived the government of one of its members, that administration should be removed, they would indeed have merited to be stigmatized as the basest of mortals. Under such a cover they disdained to place themselves, and they had ventured to hope, that those who for four years had successfully conducted the affairs of the kingdom, had not forfeited all claim to the confidence of the sovereign, by the unfortunate death of one individual. He hoped he should not be considered as trespassing too much on the attention of the House, or of indulging habits which were too familiar to him, if he offered to their consideration a few words respecting himself. He wished to justify himself in the opinion of the House, by stating fairly and distinctly what the views and principles were on which he had acted. He had felt it to be his duty at a time, when, for want of abler assistance, a more effective and desirable arrangement could not take place, not to abandon his situation, or withdraw his humble services from the government. He believed it was not necessary for him to acquit himself of having entertained any feelings of impatient ambition, or from the charge of having acted from any other motive than a desire to support those principles to which he had always adhered, at a period when they seemed to be put to hazard. So far, indeed, as his own personal honour was concerned, (and he hoped that it would never be called in question, as he held that it would be then next to lost) he was happy in a perfect consciousness that he had omitted no effort to prevent any considerations personal to himself from interfering with the formation of an arrangement on an extended basis. Aware that his presence might have embarrassed government in prosecuting the object of availing themselves of those talents and connections, which were deemed to be advantageous for the promotion of the interest of the state, he had felt it his duty to tender his resignation to his royal highness. This he had done, not from any wish to shrink from the difficulties of an arduous employment; those who knew him best, he was sure, would admit that his nature was incapable of such a sentiment; but he had so acted exclusively from a sense of duty, and an earnest and sincere desire to put himself altogether out of the question. He had tendered his resignation, and had done so with an anxious wish that it should be accepted. He was no party whatever to those negociations which had recently taken place, but he did think the right honourable gentleman had pressed a little too hard on his right honourable friend near him, and his honourable friend the member for Yorkshire. Were they to be told that the publication of documents in the Morning Chronicle, (and some wonder might reasonably be entertained, that this publication should have been so speedy) was a proper or sufficient ground for any parliamentary proceeding? The right honourable gentleman had no doubt acted on feelings quite satisfac-

tory to his own mind on this occasion; he himself had not seen these documents till yesterday, but he did consider it the duty of every man to refuse his services to an administration, if he was conscientiously of opinion that those services could not be beneficial. But the right honourable gentleman refused the assistance and co-operation of his talents, because he could not carry a particular point. His great and only principle of objection to acceding to the present ministry, was, that the catholic question was not to be taken into consideration. But ought he not to have apprised the House what his practical opinion on the subject was, what was the plan by which it appeared to his judgement, that the measure to which this consideration pointed, might be ultimately carried into execution? Did the right honourable gentleman mean to say, that the present moment, and under all the circumstances of the disturbed domestic situation of the country, was a period peculiarly favourable for conceding to the catholics with perfect security to the state? Was the House then, upon the vague plea of giving the subject their consideration, to conceive themselves bound to gratify the right honourable gentleman in constructing a new administration? The honourable gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, with some few exceptions, pursued a more manly policy, and declared themselves openly the advocates of unqualified concession. He felt as strongly as any man that the question itself was a cardinal and fundamental one to the interests of the country, but it was ridiculous to talk of creating a government simply for its discussion. It appeared to him that the right honourable gentleman ought in candour to have acquainted the House that he was ready to sub- a distinct proposition, founded on his practical view of the question, and also to have laid that proposition before them. From the first moment of the union being accomplished, he had himself been uniformly friendly to the claims of the catholics. He had never made the question a political engine, or an instrument of supporting or overturning any administration. Whenever it could be shewn that the catholic body were prepared to concede those securities which he had always deemed necessary, and which had appeared to be so both to Mr Pitt and Lord Grenville, he should be willing to espouse their claims; but he never would suffer them to be made a stalking-horse for the mere purpose of embarrassing the government, at a period when objects of so much greater magnitude occupied the attention of the country. He was not disclosing state secrets, for he had, in acting both with Lord Sidmouth and Mr Perceval, stipulated to express his own individual sentiments at all times on the subject, when he explained what his conduct would be with regard to it. He would be a base and ungrateful man, if he were not readily to acknowledge that the catholics had materially assisted in accomplishing the measure of the union, but he denied that any positive and particular pledge was given to them at that period. His own language to them, and the language of Lord Cornwallis, had then, as well as subsequently, been, that there were practical difficulties which time and a spirit of mutual concession and conciliation could alone overcome.

"He had supported, when a member of Lord Sidmouth's cabinet, strenuously supported, the measure of a provision for the catholic clergy. Before he quitted that administration, he received an assurance that the measure should be recommended to his majesty; but it never was carried into effect, because in the mean time the catholic clergy had changed their

opinion of it, under the idea that it might prove injurious to their own interests. The catholics themselves ought to come forward, and declare what precise measures they want. He saw no occasion for laying upon government the task of considering their claims, but rather that the whole attention of administration should be bent to the great difficulties in which the country was placed, and above all, to the proper conduct of the war in the peninsula, particularly when the affairs of Europe were now at a most important and interesting crisis. He had heard something of the necessity of carrying on the war in the peninsula on a more extensive scale; but he should be glad to know how that could be done. The scale of warfare was the largest, the most expensive, and the most disinterested, at least as far as Spain and Portugal were concerned, of any in which the country had ever been engaged. How could it be said to be neglected, when this country was actually expending at the rate of twenty millions a year in the great cause of the peninsula? In this sum were of course included the supplies and subsidies afforded to our allies, as well as the pay and maintenance of our own armies. Under these circumstances, to say that there was any abandonment of the cause of the peninsula was an unjustifiable imputation on the government. He concluded by stating, that nothing was more impolitic than to throw discredit on a government, when there was little prospect of substituting a better in its room."— The original motion was carried by a small majority; the address was presented to the Prince Regent, and an answer returned by his royal highness, that it should be taken into consideration.

In consequence of this measure, the prince, who was placed in a singular situation, but who still retained an attachment to the ministers, sent, not for any leading member of the opposition, but for the Marquis Wellesley, whose sentiments were known to coincide very much with those of the administration. The marquis undertook the task imposed on him with alacrity. The principles of this eminent statesman have been already explained; guarded concession to the Roman catholics, and a more vigorous prosecution of the war in the peninsula, formed their distinguishing character. As to the former point, he stood between the two parties, but approached the opposition; as to the latter, he differed in some degree from ministers, but very widely from their adversaries. As his views did not coincide with those of either party, they could be carried into execution only by vesting the chief sway in himself; but the adherents on whom he could depend, possessed neither numbers nor influence sufficient to form the whole or even the chief part of an administration. He seems therefore to have conceived the project of combining the conflicting parties in nearly equal proportions, so that he himself with his small band might be able to make the scale incline towards either side, and thus obtain a supremacy over both. The scheme was undoubtedly chimerical; coalition-ministries are always weak, unpopular, and short-lived; since the discordant parties never unite in such a manner as to confirm their own power, or promote by their vigour the interests of the country. But if two parties, who unite spontaneously for mutual advantage, are incapable of continuing to act together, what can be expected from an union formed by an extraneous influence, for the purpose of neutralizing their power, and balancing them against each other, so as to secure the predominance of a third party differing from both? Lord Wellesley's anticipations of success seem therefore to

have been very extravagant; and he would probably have acted with far more wisdom if he had attached himself to the party, to which he was most closely allied by principle. How could he imagine, that the accession of Lords Grey and Grenville, who had so firmly opposed the war in the peninsula, should have conduced to the prosecution of that contest with augmented vigour? Even had his plan obtained a temporary success, he must soon have discovered that his grand measures were pursued with languor under the new coalition, and that all his views were frustrated, while he himself must have been compelled to retire from public life with disgust.

Such however was not his own opinion at this time; and he accordingly proceeded, through the medium of Mr Canning, to open a communication in the first instance with the Earl of Liverpool, and to explain the basis of the new administration. The early consideration of the catholic question, and the more vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain, were announced as the chief conditions; and all subordinate matters were left to future arrangement. The proposal was distinctly and instantly declined by Lords Liverpool and Melville, for reasons, which it will now be proper to explain.

A few days after the death of Mr Perceval, a statement of the causes of Lord Wellesley's resignation, which had every appearance of authenticity, found its way into the public papers. In this document it was said that the Marquis Wellesley had differed very much in opinion from his late colleagues; that his voice had been of little or no weight in the cabinet; and that he had declined remaining in office chiefly because the war in the peninsula had been conducted on a narrow scale; That Mr Perceval, who was followed by the rest of the cabinet, had thought it impracticable to extend the military operations,—an opinion from which Lord Wellesley altogether dissented; that his lordship had often yielded, for the sake of harmony, to opinions of which he could not approve; but that in his judgement the cabinet neither possessed ability and knowledge to devise a good plan, nor temper and discernment to adopt what was recommended to them; To Mr Perceval's judgement and attainments, it was added, that Lord Wellesley could not pay any deference without injury to the public service.—That Lord Wellesley had requested leave to resign on the 16th of January; that this request was notified to the Prince Regent and Mr Perceval at the same time; a disposition having however been expressed by Lord Wellesley to accommodate the period of his resignation to the pleasure of the Prince Regent, and to the convenience of Mr Perceval. That although Mr Perceval had expressed his satisfaction with this course of proceeding, he had, without any communication to Lord Wellesley, repeatedly urged the Regent, with great earnestness, to remove the latter, and had proposed Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth to succeed him; That on the expiration of the restrictions, Lord Wellesley again expressed his wish to resign, and intimated his opinions to the Prince Regent on the subjects of catholic emancipation, and the continental war. That his lordship would have been willing to serve *with* Mr Perceval, had his own opinions been recognised, but would never have consented to serve *under* him in any circumstances. That he had offered, however, to act under Lords Moira or Holland, and made no exception to any prime minister but Mr Perceval, whom he considered to be incompetent to fill that high office, although sufficiently qualified for inferior stations. That on the 19th

of February, the Prince Regent's acceptance of Lord Wellesley's resignation was formally announced.

The unexpected appearance of this statement, in circumstances so peculiar, —the severe reflections which it contained on the talents and conduct of administration, and, above all, the unexpected attack made upon the reputation of its late chief, filled the remaining members with astonishment. As the paper was not disavowed by Lord Wellesley, they had every reason to believe that it contained a correct and authentic account of his sentiments. It was very generally remarked, that even according to the above explanation of the conduct of Marquis Wellesley, there yet remained much to be accounted for; that although he had in this paper published his disapprobation of the measures of his late colleagues, not one instance of his dissent stood on the records of the cabinet; and although measures which he had thought of the greatest importance to the safety and honour of the country had been obstinately neglected by the administration of which he formed a part, he had still continued, for a length of time, and with a sacrifice of duty, to give it his countenance and support. The friends and admirers of Mr Perceval were still more severe in their reprehensions. They complained that although the Marquis had alluded to many extravagant schemes for the conduct of the war, he had never yet pointed directly towards any practicable improvement; and they hinted also, that projects which to him might have appeared easy of execution, might well have been viewed in a different light by the minister of finance, who was compelled to accommodate his plans to the resources of the empire. It was generally remarked, also, that the language which had been used towards Mr Perceval in this statement was a good deal more pointed and severe than the occasion demanded, and could be explained only on the supposition that a personal dislike had been entertained towards the deceased minister. The time chosen for the publication, besides, was singularly unfortunate; and the ministers, who felt a sincere reverence for the talents and integrity of their late colleague, could not, without pain, see his reputation thus assailed when he could no longer vindicate his injured fame. This feeling was natural to their situation, and honourable to their characters; and little surprise, therefore, was felt when they expressed their resolution not to become members of any administration to be formed by Lord Wellesley.

His lordship, in addressing himself to Lords Grey and Grenville, stated, that although he had been commanded by the Prince Regent to lay before his royal highness the plan of such an administration as the present crisis of affairs seemed to require, he should neither claim nor desire for himself any place in the new arrangements. The leading questions stated in the communication to Lord Liverpool were, of course, put to Lords Grey and Grenville, who replied, that they thought it their duty, at such a moment, to offer a frank and conciliatory explanation of their principles.—That, with respect to the merits of the catholic claims, their opinions were well known; that they had been highly gratified by Lord Wellesley's powerful exertions in support of these claims; that as to the direction of military operations, and the vigorous prosecution of the war, the question was one not of principle, but of policy, to be regulated by circumstances, which in many cases could be known only to persons in official situations; and that with reference to this subject, they would undertake for nothing more than to give it a deliberate and dispas-

sionate consideration. They expressed the strongest doubts, however, of the practicability of increasing the public expenditure.

A communication to the same effect having been made to Lords Lansdowne and Holland, they signified their entire concurrence in the sentiments of Lords Grey and Grenville. Lord Moira, who was also consulted, intimated a similar opinion, and expressed an earnest desire that vigorous measures should be taken for the correction of internal abuses.—There had been a slight discrepancy betwixt the communication made by Mr Canning to the Earl of Liverpool, and that which was made by Lord Wellesley to Lords Grey and Grenville, of which these noblemen requested an explanation. In the minute of Mr Canning's communication, an "*early*" discussion of the catholic claims had been insisted on; the word "*immediate*," with reference to the same subject, had been used by Marquis Wellesley. Mr Canning had proposed that the war in Spain should be carried on with the "best means of the country;" and the Marquis Wellesley had spoken of conducting it "on a scale of adequate vigour." On these points a satisfactory explanation was communicated; the language in both cases having, it was said, been intended to convey the same meaning. It was the leading object both of Marquis Wellesley and Mr Canning, to accelerate parliamentary proceedings of such a character as to insure, either by compulsion on a hostile administration, or by a pledge from a friendly one, the consideration of the catholic question during the recess, with the view of its being brought forward early in the ensuing session. It was their earnest desire, they added, so to conduct this delicate business as to embrace the interests and consult the opinions of the English catholics also, and to obtain the enlightened and deliberate concurrence of the protestants of both countries. With regard to the war in Spain, the propositions of both, it was said, substantially announced the joint opinions of Lord Wellesley and Mr Canning,—that the exertions of the country should be extended to the utmost possible limits, and applied in the manner best calculated to secure the great objects in view.—Earl Grey was not quite satisfied with this explanation; he expressed a decided opinion that something should be done for the catholics even during the present session of parliament; at all events, that the most distinct and authentic pledge should be given of the intention both of the executive government and of parliament to take their case into consideration on the opening of the next session. With respect to the war in Spain, Earl Grey was more reserved; he merely declared, "that if it should be found expedient to continue the exertions now making in the peninsula, they should be conducted in the manner best calculated to answer their end."—Even Lord Wellesley must have discovered in this vague declaration the wish of Earl Grey and his friends to reserve the full power of acting in this momentous affair according to their own views of policy, which were already well known to the country. It was clear also that they wished to precipitate the discussion of the catholic question; and although they merited high praise for their manly declaration of principles to which they adhered with unshaken firmness and consistency, their coalition in such circumstances, either with the Marquis Wellesley and Mr Canning, or with the ministers, could have afforded no hope of a stable and united government. These circumstances, however, seem to have made little impression on Lord Wellesley at the time; his radical difference of opinion with the whig

leaders was not the cause of the failure of his commission; but the peremptory refusal of the ministers to become members of any administration to be formed by him put an end to the negociations.

The Marquis Wellesley's first commission having failed, he was afterwards fully authorised by the Prince Regent to form a new ministry, and with that view to communicate with Lords Grey and Grenville. The basis which has been already explained was again laid down, and it was declared that no person should be excluded who expressed a concurrence in these great principles. Lord Wellesley, who had been selected to conduct the negociation, was to be appointed first lord of the treasury; Lords Moira and Erskine, and Mr Canning, were to be members of the cabinet, which was to be composed of twelve or thirteen members. If of twelve, Lords Grey and Grenville were to recommend four for the approbation of the Prince Regent, and five if the cabinet extended to thirteen, to fill such situations in the public councils as might be afterwards arranged. It was finally declared that the ministers should be included, if they chose to accept of office under the new arrangement.

This proposal was as hastily declined by the whig leaders as the former had been by the ministers. They complained that there had been a great departure in this instance from the usual practice in such negociations; that no consideration had been proposed of the measures and arrangements which it was necessary to understand before acceding to such a proposal; that the outlines of the cabinet had been arranged before any communication was made to those who were to take a conspicuous part in its proceedings; that Lords Grey and Grenville were merely called on to recommend a number (limited by previous stipulation) of persons willing to be included; that a principle of disunion and jealousy was thus introduced, incompatible with the project of a strong and efficient administration, while the times imperiously required an administration united in principle, and strong in mutual reliance, to secure to the government the good opinion and affection of the people.—Lord Moira, by whose advice it was understood that this new project had been formed, felt that he was implicated in the censure thus obliquely cast upon it; he accordingly remonstrated with Earl Grey upon the subject. He stated, that when the great public objects which were to occupy the attention of the cabinet had been previously explained, the danger of disunion could not be apprehended; that as Lord Erskine's name and his own had been included in that part of Lord Wellesley's propositions which regulated the appointments to high offices, a majority had actually been given to those who had been accustomed to concur with them in great public questions,—a proof that the Marquis Wellesley did not aspire to a preponderance in the cabinet, but had carried the spirit of fairness to its utmost limits.—This remonstrance, however, produced no effect; the answer of Lords Grey and Grenville was laid before the Prince Regent, and the pleasure of his royal highness was immediately intimated,—that the formation of a new ministry should be entrusted to other hands.

Another effort was accordingly made to induce Lords Grey and Grenville to lend their talents to the aid of the public service at this great crisis; and Lord Moira having received the Prince Regent's authority to form an administration, immediately addressed himself to the noble lords. In the course of the communications which ensued the points chiefly insisted upon were the state of the catholics, and the sub

sisting relations betwixt Great Britain and America; and a full understanding having been established on these points, and an assurance given that it was not intended to impose any restraint on Lords Grey and Grenville as to the policy which they might judge it expedient to pursue, it was generally believed that the issue of the negociations could not be doubtful. But Lords Grey and Grenville, although they had now obtained the most ample concessions, although they were to be left without restraint as to all the great questions of national policy,—although they were to be enabled immediately to carry their grand measure of catholic emancipation,—to conciliate America, and to husband the resources of the country with a spirit of the most rigorous economy, had a new difficulty to surmount before they could agree to take office. And what was this difficulty? "As a preliminary question," says the minute of their conversation with Lord Moira, "which appeared to them of great importance, and which they thought it necessary immediately to bring forward, to prevent the inconvenience and embarrassment of the farther delay which might be produced if the negociation should break off at a more advanced stage, they asked whether this full liberty extended to the consideration of new appointments to those great offices in the household which had been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of administration, intimating their opinion that it would be necessary to act on the same principle on the present occasion. Lord Moira answered, that the prince had laid no restrictions on him in that respect, and had never pointed, in the most distant manner, at the protection of those officers from removal. That it would be impossible for him, (Lord Moira) however, to concur in making the exercise of this power positive and indispensable in the formation of the administration, because he would deem it on public grounds peculiarly objectionable." The negociations here terminated; and thus the final attempt made to induce Lords Grey and Grenville to come forward at a crisis of imminent danger, was rendered abortive, not on any public grounds,—not because they were refused the liberty of reducing to practice the measures of policy which they had so often declared indispensable to the salvation of the empire,—but because they were not allowed to dictate to the prince in the choice of his household officers,—because, in short, they were not permitted to usurp an absolute authority over their royal master. The difficulty on account of which these negociations were broken off, was one which had been seldom experienced in the forming of a new administration, and the question itself was of no great importance, except to the gratification of feelings of which it was generally thought that the circumstances of the times imperiously demanded the suppression.

The nation had already manifested extreme disgust and impatience on account of the anarchy in which it had been so long plunged; and many invectives were freely uttered against public men, who, from motives of personal animosity or ambition, withdrew themselves at such a crisis from the service of the country. It had been supposed, therefore, that the appointment of Lord Moira, a man distinguished by his popular talents, and who was not so closely connected with either party, as those who had been formerly engaged in the negociations, would have been attended with the desired success; but every hope of this kind now vanished. The country has little reason, perhaps, to regret that the measures for bringing Lords Grey and Grenville into power proved ineffec-

trial; but it is not the less true that their conduct on this occasion deserves to be kept in remembrance.—Lord Moira, indeed, was severely censured in this instance by the friends of the opposition. And for what was he thus censured? because he thought it right, before delivering his royal master into the hands of men, the warmth of whose attachment to him had somewhat abated, to provide for his personal comfort.—Some persons pretended to consider the household appointments as involving a great constitutional question; yet it might have been asked, how the constitution could require that the sovereign should be controlled in the selection of men who take no ostensible share in the public councils,—who are not responsible for any public measure,—but who merely swell the pomp of his retinue, and become the companions of his private life. There existed no constitutional necessity, therefore, for the removal of the household officers; and there was just as little policy in the plan, considered with a view to more selfish considerations. If the prince, as some persons ventured to assert, was greatly attached to the officers of his household,—if their influence with him might have been employed to the disadvantage of the new administration, was there any reason to expect that their removal from office would remove them also from the favour of his royal highness? Such a step could only have increased their zeal to overthrow the men who had expelled them, thus have rendered the power of the ministers more precarious; and it would have been prudent therefore, by permitting them to continue in office, to have attempted to mitigate or extinguish a hostility which could not cease to be formidable.

Such was the general opinion entertained of these transactions; it is but fair, however, that all the parties connected with them should have an opportunity of explaining their conduct in their own way; and as this opportunity was soon afforded them in parliament, it becomes necessary to take a review of the proceedings which occurred there with reference to the negociations. After the debate on the motion of Mr Stuart Wortley, of which an account has been already given, nothing was said on the subject of ministerial arrangements, until Lord Moira, in the House of Lords, rose to demand an explanation relating to some expressions of the Marquis Wellesley's, by which he imputed the failure of the negociation, "to dreadful personal animosities existing in certain quarters." Lord Moira complained, that "as it had been found difficult to apply it to any noble lord engaged in the negociations, the expression had been construed as applying to an exalted personage, and was calculated, of course, to produce the most baneful effects on the public mind. He was disposed to believe, that these expressions had been uttered merely in the heat of debate; and was astonished that any one could believe that personal animosity was felt by the exalted personage, who had uniformly acted as a father to his people. He stated, that in the projected arrangements of the cabinet, as, on the one hand, the illustrious personage to whom he had alluded, never did limit the powers bestowed upon the noble marquis, and never did make a reservation of a single place to be filled on subsequent consideration; so, on the other hand, there never was a stipulation for the exclusion of any class of persons, but the most ample authority had been granted, to lay before the Prince Regent any plan for the formation of a government competent to conduct the business of the nation." The Marquis Wellesley, to whom allusion had been made, was not present

on this occasion; but Lord Grenville, while he expressed a conviction that the words had been uttered in the heat of debate, and that no importance ought to be attached to them, distinctly disclaimed for himself all feelings of personal animosity. He complained, however, of the nature of the arrangements which had been recently proposed; and remarked, that one high office specially designated, had been reserved for a particular individual; that the share of himself and Lord Grey in the appointments of the cabinet, had been very unreasonably circumscribed; and he acknowledged, that on these grounds, the determination of himself and of his friends had been founded. Lord Grey concurred in what had been stated by Lord Grenville, and disputed the assertion of Lord Moira, that the proposal had come to himself and his coadjutors perfectly unfettered by previous stipulation.—Lord Moira, however, dissented from the interpretation put on the documents by Lords Grey and Grenville; and contended, that as his own name and that of Lord Erskine (both of whom had been accustomed to act and vote with the opposition) had been expressly included, nothing could more decisively prove the intentions with which the proposition had been framed, since a complete ascendancy in the administration was thus to have been conferred on the noble lord and his friends.

On the 8th of June, the Earl of Liverpool intimated to the House of Lords, that the Prince Regent had been pleased to appoint him first commissioner of the treasury, and that his royal highness had given authority for completing with all possible dispatch the other arrangements of the administration.—The Duke of Norfolk then alluded to the vote of the House of Commons, for an address to the Prince Regent to form a strong administration, and insisted that no circumstance had since occurred to alter the opinion of the House or of the country on this subject.—Lord Liverpool answered, "that he and his colleagues, so soon as that vote was made known to them, requested of the Prince Regent, that they might form no obstacle in the way of arrangements so much desired. That he was not called on to state the circumstances which had led to the failure of the late negociation, but that he would have shrunk from his duty to the prince and to the country, if he had declined to accept the appointment which his royal highness had been pleased to confer on him."—Lord Moira rose to state the objects which he had kept in view throughout the late negociations. "It had been his wish not only to secure the assistance of men of great talents to the government, but to reconcile the differences existing among public men; and while he was ready to confess the candour and openness with which the ministers had met his proposal, with regret he reflected that some unhappy circumstances had rendered his efforts unavailing. In this situation he expressed his determination to support the ministry, so far as they might act consistently with the principles which had guided his political life."—The Marquis Wellesley rose to explain the expressions which had been used by him on a preceding evening; he stated, "that he was formerly unwilling to disclose the circumstances which had induced him to employ such language, lest he might irritate and inflame those dreadful personal animosities, which had already manifested themselves in the course of the negociation; that in using these expressions he had alluded to Lord Liverpool and his colleagues, with whom the only obstacles had arisen to his grand arrangements."—The Marquis Wellesley was called upon by the Earl of Harrowby to bring proof of this very

serious charge, and was earnestly desired not to postpone from day to day, an explanation of so much importance to the interests of the country. Lord Wellesley here explained; "that he did not mean to charge the Earl of Liverpool or his colleagues with any intention to defeat the object of the resolution of the House of Commons; he had merely stated the fact, that those noble lords and their friends had opposed serious obstacles to the negociations. He acknowledged that he had used the words imputed to him with the utmost caution and consideration, and disavowed the apology which had been offered for him by Lord Grenville. No better proof of his charge, he said, could be required, than the language of Lords Liverpool and Melville, the one of whom had expressly declined to be a member of any administration formed by Lord Wellesley, while the other had stated his objection as a matter of personal feeling. Lord Wellesley did not mean to disapprove of such feelings; but he still contended that he had a right to describe them as personal, and as indicating a marked animosity towards himself."—The Earl of Harrowby replied to this accusation, by stating, "that he and his friends had on the very day on which the motion alluded to was carried, agreed to form part of an administration of which Lord Wellesley was to have had the lead; but he confessed that circumstances had occurred in the interim which had altered their determination. He alluded first of all to the publication of the correspondence between Lords Liverpool and Wellesley, unaccompanied by the explanatory letter of the former; and complained of the unfairness of this publication, as the principal cause of the vote in the House of Commons. But his heaviest charge against Lord Wellesley was founded on the indiscreet publication of that statement, in which the marquis accused his late colleagues of incapacity to conduct the government of the country. He denied that differences of opinion had existed in the cabinet while Lord Wellesley was a member of it, and complained of the time and circumstances chosen for the publication. 'The statement had wounded the feelings of the ministers, through the memory of him who had just fallen by the hands of an assassin, whom they had considered as the life and soul of their cabinet, and whom they in the highest degree respected and esteemed; a man of unimpeachable integrity, who never wanted defence in the eyes of those who best knew his value. Lord Harrowby acknowledged, that although the conduct of Lord Wellesley had not excited personal animosities, it had produced feelings in himself and his friends, which rendered it impossible for them cordially to unite with the marquis in any administration."

Lord Wellesley replied, "that this speech afforded the strongest evidence of his former assertions, and proved the existence of the feeling which had already produced consequences so serious. He solemnly denied, that he had been a party to the publication of the statement; and admitted, that, although correct as to important points, it contained many expressions which he would not have used in writing for the public. He stated, that after he tendered his resignation to the Prince Regent, and was requested to hold his office for a short time, Mr Perceval made several applications to have him removed, which Lord Wellesley thought very unmanly. That his resignation no sooner became known, than many of his friends, who were very anxious with respect to the motives which had led to the step, took down in writing his account of it in the expressions which had dropped

from him in the heat of conversation. That although his friends had been often solicited to permit the publication of 'the statement,' they had uniformly refused; and so far was Lord Wellesley from participating in an act so discreditable, that he had been 'horror-struck' when he saw the document in the public papers." "The statement," he declared, "was not his; and contained expressions which he would not have used in a document intended for the public eye, more especially at a moment when the country had lost a man of the most irreproachable character, of the most perfect integrity, of the mildest heart, of the most amiable qualities, distinguished, in short, for every private virtue. He contended, however, that it was no reproach to any man to be thought unfit for the supreme direction of government; and although he considered the act which deprived Mr Perceval of existence as a stain on humanity, he never considered him when alive as a fit person to lead the councils of this great empire. He acknowledged that he had never formally dissented in the cabinet from the opinions of his colleagues; although he had frequently done and said enough to put them in full possession of his sentiments. He highly approved, however, of many of their measures, and would give them his cordial support in so far as he could do so consistently with the deliberate opinion which he had formed on the great points of national policy. In the hasty publication of the correspondence relating to the negociations for forming a new ministry, he had been influenced by a desire to satisfy the people on a subject to which they looked with the most painful anxiety. He concluded, however, by repeating, that obstacles had been opposed by the ministers to the establishment of an efficient administration, and that these obstacles originated in feelings of a personal nature."—Lord Grey came forward to bear his testimony against the administration. "A strong suspicion had always operated on his mind in the course of the late negociations, that he and his friends were either not to be admitted into the cabinet at all, or, if admitted, that they were to be bound down in such a manner, that the public should be secured against the influence of the principles and measures, to which, during their whole parliamentary existence, they had been pledged." He paid many compliments to himself and his associates; and declared that when his services should be called for, there was no danger which should appal him, no difficulty from which he would shrink. He cast some reflections on the conduct of Lords Wellesley and Moira; for although he could discover nothing in his recent intercourse with them, but an unceasing and earnest desire to conciliate, and a laudable anxiety for the general good, he suspected that they themselves had been deceived, and were not aware of the secret management of which they had been made the instruments.—Lord Moira repelled this charge with indignation, and solemnly declared, that he undertook the negociations "without a single particle of reservation in the authority with which he was entrusted." He added, that "throughout the whole progress of his negociation with Lords Grey and Grenville, he had stated beyond the possibility of a misapprehension, that his instructions were of the most liberal and unlimited nature." Rising into a strain of unusual warmth, he declared that the transaction from beginning to end had been conducted with "a severity of fairness," if he might use the phrase, which was perhaps unparalleled. "I claim," said he, "of the noble earl a statement

of the particular circumstances to which he alludes, that I may repel the assertion in as haughty a tone as he has ventured to make it. My lords, I feel that I have not deserved this reproach. It is a disgrace which I do not merit, and which I cannot bear. If he can bring forward but the shadow of proofs, that even unknowingly I submitted to be made such an instrument, I shall bow my head to his reproof, and to the degradation which must ensue. If he cannot, I shall repel the imputation as proudly as it was made. I repeat it, there never was in the most insignificant point the slightest reservation, or hint of reservation. The powers given to me were complete and ample, and whenever limited, they were limited only by me, from a sense of what was due to the public. I now call upon the noble earl more satisfactorily to explain his meaning." Lord Grey, instead of answering, as might have been expected, this strong appeal, complained to the House that he himself had not been employed to form an administration, and hinted that future opportunities would occur when he should be able to give a more distinct explanation of his language.—Lord Grenville wound up this extraordinary debate, by declaring that the points which he and Lord Grey had refused to concede in their negociations with the earl of Moira, were "of material and fundamental importance;" and that they would never consent to become efficient members of an administration formed on a principle, which, in their deliberate opinions, "was calculated to overthrow the practice of the constitution."

In the House of Commons, the late negociations were severely scrutinised, and a very unfavourable view was taken by many members of the conduct of Lords Grey and Grenville. Mr Stuart Wortley, whose former motion had met with accidental success, again proposed, in very different circumstances, an address to the Prince Regent, regretting that the former address had not been followed by the consequences which had been expected, and expressing the anxiety of the House that the arrangements for establishing an efficient administration should be speedily brought to a close. The conduct of Lords Grey and Grenville was frequently alluded to in the course of the debate. "Lord Moira, it was said, had received an unlimited, unconditional power from the Prince Regent, and had expressed to Lords Grey and Grenville, that all the great and leading questions of policy would be laid at their feet, to be managed as they chose. Lord Moira, however, would not agree to what was insisted upon as a preliminary condition—the regulation of the household; and on this account those noble lords were content to throw away all the great and darling objects of their political wishes, for the accomplishment of which they had been contending during the whole of their lives. This was unjustifiable. Their excuse, indeed, was their jealousy of the influence which they supposed existed somewhere, and over which they could have no controul. The conduct of the noble lords, however, was exactly such as to strengthen that influence; for suppose the persons alluded to were to be turned out, would they then be less able to exercise this supposed predominance? or would they, for being turned out, be less inclined to exert it? and was such conduct likely to conciliate the mind of him whom it was most important to gain over? When these great principles, in which, according to the view of the subject entertained by the noble lords, the fundamental interests of the country were

concerned, were granted to them, they ought to have made a peace-offering of all the rest.

"So much on private grounds; but on public grounds, was it wise,—was it politic to hold up such an implied charge to the public, as that which had been insinuated by the noble lords,—to promulgate such a stipulation? What proof had they,—what proof had the public, of the truth of their implication? Was it because the noble lords were not called into office at the beginning of the regency, that they suspected the existence of secret influence? The nation at large then approved of their exclusion. Was it because they were not called to the government of affairs when the restrictions expired? Even then a great part of the nation were not displeased at their non-admission; and now that an opportunity had offered, these noble lords had debarred themselves, by their own conduct, from becoming the administration of the country. What followed? Lord Moira resigned his powers, and by that noble lord's advice, the Prince Regent called in once more the assistance of his old servants.

"It might be asked, whether the executive government had not used every possible means to form an administration?—In one instance, the negociation had been broken off, because the noble lords thought they would not possess a sufficient preponderance in the cabinet, while, in the other, although Lord Moira had received unlimited powers, and after it had been settled that every place in the cabinet should be at his and his colleagues' disposal, it went off, because these noble lords could not obtain power to dismiss the household."

The force of these general considerations was irresistible; nothing more was necessary to settle the public opinion; and to prove that every thing had been done by the Regent to accomplish the wishes of the House of Commons. With respect to the household, however, a farther explanation of great importance was given by Lord Yarmouth. He stated, "with respect to the household, that it was the intention of himself and his friends to resign the situations which they held, previously to the new administration entering upon office. This intention of theirs was well known; they took every means of stating it in quarters whence it had any likelihood of reaching the ears of the parties interested; and in particular they communicated it to a right honourable gentleman who took an active part in the negociation, and with whom, all who knew him confessed it was a happiness to spend their private hours. They took every means short of official resignation to shew that they never wished to have any connection with the noble lords. And their intention originated in a wish to save the Prince Regent from that humiliation which he must have experienced from their being turned out of office—a humiliation which could only serve to convey an unfavourable impression throughout the country against the government. He did not speak in the name of one or two, but of all the officers of the household. They stated expressly to his royal highness that they wished to resign, and not to be turned out; and all that they requested was, that they might know, ten minutes before certain gentlemen received the seals, that such a circumstance was to take place, that they might have it in their power to make a timely resignation. He declared, on his conscience, before God, that their intentions were such as he had stated, and that the only principle by which they were actuated was to save the prince from humiliation; for he could not but consider the attempt to make this change in the household a preliminary to entering upon the ne-

gociation, as calculated to humiliate his royal highness in the eyes of the country."

Mr Ponsonby denied that the intention of the household officers to resign had been intimated to his noble friends; and, in defence of their conduct, entered into a full account of the negociations. Mr Sheridan, however, in the course of an explanatory speech, which he delivered to refute some groundless accusations made against him in the public newspapers, confirmed the statement of Lord Yarmouth; and confessed, that the determination of the officers of the household to resign so soon as a new administration should be formed, had been communicated to him.—Lord Castlereagh, in the following manly and statesman-like speech, explained his grounds for opposing the motion; defended the conduct of himself and his colleagues, and touched on all the most interesting points connected with the late transactions. "In commenting on transactions of such a delicate nature, he would be cautious," he said, "not to aggravate the differences of public men, or to widen breaches, injurious to the welfare of the state. With respect to the motion, the expressions which it contained were unexceptionable. In the first place, the thanks to the Regent for his gracious attention to the express wishes of the House; in the second, the regret that his royal highness had not found it possible to form a more comprehensive administration, were stated in the motion. To all this he would have no hesitation in being a party, and to the further expression of hope, that his royal highness would avail himself of any opportunity that might occur for strengthening his present administration. But when it came to be asked, with what motive this address was moved, he put it to the House, if the obvious import of it was not calculated to throw a shade over the administration, which (subject to the view of parliament) was charged with the fate and the interests of the country. The address was uncalled for by any message from the crown. It could lead to no practical result. Its only effect would be to bring the administration under the insinuation, founded on its external structure, and not on its conduct, that it was not likely to possess the confidence of the country. He trusted, therefore, that the honourable gentleman would withdraw his motion—for he could not conceive it possible that the House would sanction it for no other purpose but to disqualify the government from executing the arduous task in which it had engaged. With respect to that administration, whatever might have been their public services, they certainly had not shewn any disposition to stand between the crown and the people.—All parties, it was confessed, had acted, during the late transactions, with the greatest liberality. Three or four distinct negociations had failed, and the crown was obliged to call on the present administration to charge itself with the affairs of the country. It was his consolation that while on the one hand he and his colleagues had never stood between the crown and the people, so on the other hand they had never shewn a disposition to shrink from the discharge of public duties, deterred as they otherwise might be by the accumulated difficulties which the late transactions had occasioned. Ministers were ready to do all that was required of them, trusting that parliament would give them fair and full confidence.—They wished their conduct to be judged by their acts, in order that they might receive the support of parliament, if they were deserving of it, and if they were not, that they might bow to the decision of the House. He hoped that the late trans

actions would induce the House not again to push the principle which they had so strongly asserted. Those must be blind who could not see the calamitous consequences which the occurrences of the last three weeks were calculated to produce on our foreign and domestic relations For although the sentiments manifested in the various negociations had been honourable to all parties, he could not help thinking that the mode which seemed to be in practice in modern times of forming an administration, was most injurious, and might be fatal to the interests of the country. Never, in ancient times, had a negociation between public men been exhibited to the eye of parliament and the country at large, and exposed to all the invidious comments which the malignity and the ignorance of mankind passed upon them. For his part he could never augur well of any negociation in which two men could not approach each other in a private room, although on public principles, without coming armed with pen and ink, and prepared to allow every thing they might utter to go forth immediately for the judgment of the public. After the termination of such a negociation, it had been common for something of the proceedings to be made public, but never till of late had it been the practice of those who were forming an administration, to submit their propositions and intentions to the public while yet they were but in progress. The consequences of such conduct, as developed in the present instance, would, he trusted, have the effect of preventing the recurrence of such scenes for the time to come. He had now to speak to that part of the late transactions with which he was connected. He had waited on his royal highness on the night of the 21st, to report to him the proceedings in parliament, previously to his majesty's ministers giving their advice on the subject of that vote; and from that night, till he and his colleagues were recalled to their offices, excepting in the circle at the levee, he had never seen the prince. He had only been connected with the negociations when the Marquis Wellesley invited the members of the late cabinet to form an administration. It was a painful task for him to speak on this subject, but he disclaimed every thing like personal animosity to the noble marquis. He trusted it was not necessary to go through the whole of the detail, as the circumstances must be fresh in the memory of the House. The paper which had been published, he understood to have been published without the consent of the noble marquis; but after such a paper had appeared, describing the late minister and those who had acted with him, as the paper to which he alluded did, he would put it to the House, if gentlemen situated as were his colleagues, could, without degradation, meet such a proposition in any other way than that in which it had been met. For the noble marquis he entertained the sincerest respect, with the highest admiration for his accomplishments and his talents; all he felt in this respect was heightened by the consideration, that he was the brother of the greatest soldier this country had produced. It was therefore a peculiarly painful task for him to be called upon to decide on such a question, as the propositions of the noble marquis brought before him; but the feelings of his colleagues were naturally such, that but one answer could be given. This he (Lord Castlereagh) felt, and though he was not included in this description, yet the description given of his colleagues being unjust and inaccurate, according to his ideas, he must have abandoned every sense of duty if he had not been anxious to repel the charge. It was under these circumstances that the answer

had been returned to the Marquis Wellesley; but that the proposition which he had made had been rejected with any thing of personal animosity, was an idea which he trusted the House and the country would dismiss altogether. Such an idea was now, he trusted, dismissed from the breast of the noble marquis himself; for as he (the marquis) had declared that he would never again, under any circumstances, serve under his departed friend Mr Perceval, as well might he (Lord C.) accuse the noble marquis of having cherished a feeling of animosity against that illustrious character, as he (the marquis) could accuse him (Lord C.) and his colleagues of such a feeling from their recent conduct. No feeling was more distant from their mind, nor more abhorrent to their nature, than a feeling like that which he had described on such an occasion. With respect to the late negociations he would say, that if there were in the first instance difficulties in forming an administration, those difficulties must have been always increased when the negociations were exposed in their progress to the observations of the critic. Parliament had no reason to be afraid of such negociations being privately carried on.—He declared, that in the English history, a proceeding so sudden, with so short a notice, was not to be found as that which they had lately seen, when the House decided, not against a government who by their own immediate and direct conduct had proved themselves unworthy of confidence, but against an administration, of which the formation was but in progress He hoped their conduct, in this instance, would form a precedent which future parliaments would never follow.—A great deal had been said of the unconstitutional conduct of the administration, because each member of the cabinet would be left to act in his individual character on the catholic question; but really he did not see that there were any grounds for all the horror expressed by his right honourable friend and the gentlemen opposite. The gentlemen opposite who were so much struck with this arrangement, on looking more closely into the business would find that it was only a plagiarism on their own conduct In Lord Grenville's administration, though the catholic question was a cabinet measure, it was allowed to two of the cabinet (Lords Sidmouth and Ellenborough) to defend their own opinions, which were in opposition to the concession; and he hoped the present government might be sheltered under the wing of such a precedent from the charge of venturing upon new principles. For himself he felt perfectly at liberty to take any course on the catholic question which his judgment might dictate; and he had no hesitation in saying, he should be willing to go into a discussion on that subject with any man in or out of that House, that seemed to promise to lead to any practical and beneficial result. Adverting to the point on which the last negociation, that of the Earl of Moira, had broken off, he would say, (though he would be the last man to impute any thing of disrespect to the crown on the part of either of the noble lords,) that the point for which they had contended, though he would never say that it ought to be placed on any footing distant from other political arrangements, had never been contended for as in the present instance, prior to the discussion of the other arrangements It was clear Lord Moira had understood this to be the subject of after consideration, as he had declared, 'that it was impossible for him to concur in making the exercise of power over the household officers, a positive and indispensable condition in the formation of a government.' The subject had unfortu-

nately been taken up in a tone of harshness which the country would never countenance in those who approached the throne.

"And now all I have to say for ministers," concluded the noble lord, "is, that they claim the constitutional support of parliament, till their actions seem to speak them unworthy of it; and though the present government may not possess within itself all those attributes which we have heard given to broad and extended administrations, they have at least one recommendation to public confidence (and it is not a small one,) that they have no disunion among themselves. We have no private ends to answer; we are all anxious to serve our country, to do our best, and to submit our conduct to the judgment of parliament."

This excellent speech had a great effect; the House and the country were tired of the late proceedings; the motion of Mr Wortley was negatived by a great majority; and the ministers were fully established in power.

An impartial review of these transactions will enable every man to form an opinion as to the views and conduct of the different competitors for power. We find Lords Grey and Grenville, in the first instance, breaking off the negotiation with Marquis Wellesley because a sufficient share of influence was denied them; yet, out of a cabinet of thirteen persons, they were to have the recommendation of a majority, including Lords Moira and Erskine. They afterwards refused to negociate with Lord Moira, because he would not accede to their condition of dismissing the household officers; because he would not consent that his royal master should be deprived of the companions of his private hours, on the pretence of a secret influence, of which much had been said, but nothing proved; and, finally, because he would not submit to the humiliation of conceding that as a *preliminary*, which the noble lords well knew would at all events have followed as a consequence of their accession to power. The maintenance of the dignity of the sovereign—the protection of the crown against usurpation, is essential to the welfare both of the prince and the people; and the firmness and fidelity of the Earl of Moira upon this occasion, will entitle him to the lasting gratitude of his country. The grounds upon which the whig lords refused to accept of office, after every thing politically important had been conceded to them—after an offer had been made them of powers, the exercise of which they deemed essential to the salvation of the country, gave some countenance to charges which had been often made against them by their enemies; and they were, without a murmur, except among their own adherents, allowed to betake themselves to retirement.

The Marquis Wellesley stood in a different situation. He had committed errors; he had pleaded guilty to a dereliction in some degree of the duty which he owed the public, by continuing to act on principles which he disapproved; he had vainly indulged the hope of uniting with men with whom his whole political life had been at variance; he had, through negligence, allowed a publication to appear, which we have his own authority for saying that he deeply regretted; and he had hastily charged to "dreadful personal animosities" sentiments which were the result of the most honourable feelings. But his character for energy and talent stood high with the country; and his exclusion from power was sincerely regretted. The refusal of Mr Canning, whose brilliant talents were so highly admired, to accept of office, was no less lamented by the ministers than by the country.

The conduct of the ministers in the course of the negociations seems de-

serving of approbation. They did not obtrude their services on the country, but retired with a modesty which might have been advantageously imitated in other quarters; and so long as the negociations depended, they not only put themselves entirely out of consideration, but gave every facility which their principles and feelings would permit to the arrangements so anxiously desired. A sense of duty, however, called for a change of conduct on their part when the negociations had failed, and when it became apparent that without their interposition the prince and the country must have been exposed to great difficulties. They knew when it was their duty to step forward; they hesitated not to encounter the awful responsibility which belonged to a crisis so momentous; they had no other object but the service of their country; and their ability to serve it with advantage was soon acknowledged throughout Europe.

They were in the meantime completely successful at home, by obtaining the confidence and approbation of parliament and of the country. As they were anxious, however, that the general sentiment in their favour should be unequivocally declared, and as the parliament was drawing towards its natural termination, they wisely resolved on making an immediate appeal to popular opinion in the manner which is authorised by the constitution The parliament was accordingly dissolved: and while their enemies hailed this measure with shouts of triumph, the ministers waited with silent confidence the result of the election. Their opponents affected to see the overthrow of the government in the issue of this experiment; and resorted to every art for counteracting the general popularity which the ministers were fast acquiring. But the hopes of the opposition were still disappointed: Sir Samuel Romilly was unfortunate at Bristol, and Mr Brougham, after a warm contest, was obliged to yield to Mr Canning at Liverpool. The friends of the opposition had the same fortune in various other quarters, and the influence of the whigs seemed to experience a rapid decline; while the ministers derived a great accession of strength from an experiment which it was predicted would disappoint all their expectations, and prove fatal to the stability of their power.

CHAP. VII.

Affairs of Ireland. Conspiracy for extirpating Heretics and dissolving the Union. Charges made against the Irish Government. Reasons assigned for bringing forward the Catholic Question, and the Discussion of the State of Ireland at an early Period of the Session of Parliament. Result of the Parliamentary Proceedings on the State of Ireland. Mr Parnell's Motion on the Subject of Irish Tithes.

IT is a circumstance no less singular than unfortunate, that Ireland, with the great capacity which she unquestionably has for improvements of every kind, and the ample means which she possesses of adding to the power and prosperity of the empire, should hitherto, on almost every occasion, when the energies of the country were to be called forth, have proved an obstacle in many respects to their vigorous developement. With a luxuriant and fertile soil, considerable wealth and a numerous population, at once adventurous and brave, instead of contributing much to the general strength in the greatest exigencies of the empire, she has too often presented the most serious obstructions to the proceedings of government. The truth is, that Ireland has never yet been without much deep and alarming discontent; that her citizens have been incessantly urging claims upon the government, which have given rise to much intemperate discussion, and that so far from considering her alliance with England as an advantage, many of the most daring and active of her people have been busily employed in devising means by which a separation might be accomplished. It is the misfortune of the Irish nation, that while the more ambitious and intriguing of the middle ranks are perpetually engaged in fomenting discord, the lower orders, who are without wealth or education, become an easy prey to all classes of adventurers; their ignorance and credulity are easily imposed on, and their ardent spirits and ill-regulated minds are seduced without difficulty into adventures the most hazardous, and even into projects the most atrocious. It may seem strange, that, situated in the immediate neighbourhood of a great and enlightened country, enjoying all the advantages of an easy and intimate intercourse with it, and possessing, as Ireland now does, all the benefits of a political union with a people far advanced in wealth and knowledge, she should still exhibit so many deplorable symptoms of a barbarism, which, under her present system, seems to be nearly incurable. Great faults have no doubt been committed by the people, and great crimes by the demagogues, who are always at work to agitate the public mind; but the very success of such attempts, and the disposition shewn by the people to second them, afford a strong presumption that there is something in the political state

of Ireland which demands a remedy. The manifold errors of the government of Ireland, committed in past times, have left in the present age evils so difficult to be corrected, that those who are most ardent in the cause of improvement, have been often deterred by the difficulty of the task, and scared away by that violence and malignity which centuries of misgovernment have produced among the Irish people. It is no very easy task to enlighten and ameliorate a people to whom discord and violence have become so familiar; to remove the barriers which an ancient tyranny had established in its own support, and of which it has almost ensured the perpetuation by degrading the habits and character of its victims. It is manifest that a very violent change could not, in such circumstances, be justified by the principles of a wise policy, and it is no less clear, that great difficulties must occur to obstruct the progress even of those who should attempt a more gradual and therefore a more reasonable improvement on the state of this unhappy country. To add to the other misfortunes of Ireland, a great proportion of her people profess a religion which is not the religion of the state; a religion, which, for its ancient crimes and enormities, has become odious to all the professors of the reformed faith; which has an undoubted tendency to keep down in ignorance and servility those who profess its tenets, and thus to counteract all plans of political amelioration. It cannot be wonderful that, in a country thus situated, frequent symptoms of disaffection to government, numerous and atrocious crimes, and a general spirit of distrust and discord, should prevail; and although the period, of which a short account is now to be given, was not marked by any occurrences of great constitutional importance, yet was it scarcely less remarkable than some of those which preceded it for the display of that intemperate spirit which has been the parent of so many miseries to Ireland.

If many real conspiracies in Ireland have been suffered to attain an alarming magnitude before attracting public notice, we have to record a curious instance which happened during this year of a very foolish plot that excited much agitation. About the beginning of the year a meeting was held of the trustees of the charity-school, belonging to the catholic chapel in Church-street. The schoolmaster neglected to attend at the usual hour; but when the trustees were about to disperse, he made his appearance in a state of intoxication, for which he was severely reprimanded, and required to state the reasons of his absence. He endeavoured to excuse himself by alleging that he had been detained by important business; but as his duty required that all his time should be devoted to the school, the trustees refused to admit his apology. He was at last prevailed on to give a more satisfactory account of himself, when he declared that he had been engaged in the business of the New Association, to one division of which he described himself as being the secretary. He then told a very whimsical story as to the nature and objects of this association. He said it had been instituted for the purpose of separating Ireland from England by force of arms; that it had another great object in view—the extirpation of heresy; that, however, the most active person connected with it, was a Mr Fisher, a protestant; and that he, the schoolmaster, had been assured by this person, and the others engaged in the conspiracy, that it had the sanction of the catholic committee: That he himself had been supplied with a blunderbuss; that many others were armed, as it was easy to procure arms

from the stores of the Castle; and that an attack was shortly to be made on Dublin, as the garrison was known at that time to be very weak. The trustees, on hearing this story from their schoolmaster, adjourned till next day, and called him again before them He was now sober, and wished to deny or retract his former statement; but being closely pressed, he admitted that he had become a member of the association, and repeated the account which he had given on the preceding evening. The trustees instantly dismissed him from his employment, and admonished him as to the enormity of his crime, and the folly of the project in which he had embarked. The facts were communicated to some members of the catholic committee, who resolved to make the whole transaction known to the attorney-general, in the presence of Mr Grattan, or the Knight of Kerry. Neither of these gentlemen was in Dublin at the time; but expresses were sent to bring them, as well as Lord Fingal, to town without delay. These gentlemen (Messrs Grattan and Fitzgerald) were requested to wait on the attorney-general and apprise him that a communication of importance would soon be made by some members of the catholic board; they accordingly did so The attorney-general acted in the manner which became him. He saw at once the true character of the conspiracy; and as he was desirous of avoiding all concern in an affair so ridiculous, he recommended to the gentlemen who waited on him to go before a magistrate and communicate their information. As the propriety of seeing the catholic gentlemen, however, was much pressed upon him, he fixed an early day for meeting them at Mr Wellesley Pole's office in the castle to receive their communication. A committee of them accordingly waited on the attorney-general, recapitulated to him the confession of the schoolmaster, and delivered some printed papers belonging to the association. Although Mr Grattan yielded so far to the anxiety and alarm of the catholic board, as to come to town on purpose to make this marvellous communication it is probable that he viewed it from the beginning much in the same light as the attorney-general did, with whom he concurred in declaring, that the matter was not pressing, and that the communication might have been deferred without inconvenience. The members of the catholic board, however, who affected great alarm lest the ministers might profit by this conspiracy to injure their reputation, went through the whole of these proceedings with the most solemn gravity, and with a zeal which did not well correspond with the general tenor of their conduct.

Among the papers connected with this absurd association, was the following advertisement, addressed to the Roman catholics of Ireland:—"Advertisement. Roman catholics of Ireland, for Christ's sake and for the tender mercies of God, do not take up arms in your own defence, or any one else, on any account whatsoever; in that respect act exactly like the quakers, bear and forbear, suffer wrongs patiently for Christ's sake, and the Lord in time will relieve you; do not foolishly be led away by shew or fair promises to leave your poor parents, wives, or families, breaking their hearts after you, forfeiting your religion or duty to God, the church, and your neighbour. Remember he that lives by the sword must die by the sword; therefore, for the Lord's sake enter not into combination or private meetings of any sort that may give the least offence to government. Be thoroughly resigned to the will of God, and God will bless you and yours." This was, no doubt, intended as an

invitation to the people to do the very things from which they were thus ironically dissuaded; it was a clumsy device to evade the operation of the law, while the imaginations and passions of the people were inflamed by a picture of the grievances under which they were said to labour; but persons who could resort to artifices so clumsy, could never be the objects of reasonable apprehension to the government. It was justly remarked, that if ever there was an association of which folly was the active principle, this was one; and that no person could hear the account given by the secretary of the nature and objects of the conspiracy, without being convinced that its imbecility was such, as to render any degree of alarm on the part of government incompatible with a due sense of dignity. In this light the attorney-general wisely considered the subject. The conspirators rested their hopes of success on three assumptions which were palpably false.—It was assumed by them, that the design had the sanction of the catholic committee, that it would be easy to procure arms from the stores of the Castle, and that the garrison of Dublin was at that time very weak. For the falsehood of the first of these positions, the attorney-general had the evidence of his senses; of the facility of procuring arms for the purposes of rebellion out of the stores of the Castle, he was a very competent judge; and as to the weakness of the garrison of Dublin, it is difficult to imagine, how even the most stupid member of the association could have given credit to such a statement. Thus, then, while the attorney-general saw the alleged heads of the conspiracy giving him information of its existence; when he knew, also, that the arsenal from which they were to be armed was within the very precincts of the Castle, and that their ultimate hopes of success rested chiefly on the supposed weakness of a body of troops sufficient, in point of force, to have razed the city to its foundation, there is no great wonder that he was not thrown into a panic unbecoming the dignity of his office, and unworthy of any government, not conscious of utter imbecility. It was manifest, that no dangerous association existed; but it was no less clear, that a few deluded wretches really indulged hopes of the most extravagant kind, and might have been tempted to commit, in a moment of infatuation, some breach of the public peace. The schoolmaster, and one or two of his associates, were therefore apprehended and underwent examinations at the Castle; and as this enquiry fully satisfied the government as to the true nature of the association, no attempt was made, as the catholics affected to fear, to profit at their expense by these foolish transactions.

Charges such as these were, however, reiterated by the members of the catholic board, although they were manifestly founded on the grossest delusion, and calculated to render the government odious in the eyes of a credulous multitude. The late proceedings were described by them as symptoms of a conspiracy against the Irish people; and the catholics and protestants in every part of Ireland were warned, as they had the welfare of the country at heart, and as they wished to defeat the machinations of their deadliest foes, to be on their guard against the attempts of government to seduce the lower orders into unlawful associations, for the purpose of blasting the reputation of the great advocates of Irish independence. The party which had cherished orangism was accused of generating the infernal association, as it was described, of which Mr Keegan the schoolmaster was the leader; and the more respectable classes were called on to warn the peasantry and lower

orders of every description against the seduction of these ministerial agents who sought new pretences for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the introduction of martial law, and the repetition of all the enormities of which Ireland had long been the victim. In a strain of eloquence, peculiar to them selves, they declared, "that the infernal engine had been ingeniously contrived, and was secretly receiving the combustible materials; but that it would recoil on its inventors to their disgrace and ruin."—These envious declaimers did not stop to explain in what manner a conspiracy against a large portion of his majesty's subjects could be useful to the administration; they did not recollect that the existence of discord, from what source soever it may proceed, uniformly embarrasses the government, and tends to destroy its popularity. Yet the greatest praise of an administration, particularly of an Irish administration, is, that it can govern the country so as to ensure its tranquillity; while the progress of conspiracies could be encouraged only by the most egregious and contemptible folly, of which they did not even pretend to suspect the Irish ministers. They knew, however, that by disseminating such sentiments among the mob, a chance was afforded of exciting discontent against the government; and as their lives are entirely devoted to so laudable an object, they gladly seized the opportunity which the late occurrences seemed to offer, in the full confidence that few of those to whom their declamations were addressed, would detect the sophistry and malice with which they abounded.

An attempt of a different kind to disturb the peace of Ireland was attended with more serious consequences than this mock conspiracy. In some counties the most detestable outrages were, during part of the year, committed, under pretence of regulating the price of land; and, but for the prompt interference of government, the vicinity of the capital itself might have been involved in bloodshed and confusion. The miscreants who were the authors of these disturbances, called themselves *carders*, from the instrument of torture which they used for the purpose of forcing the honest and industrious proprietors of the soil to relinquish their property. The time chosen for the execution of their designs, the dead of night, perfectly suited and characterised their proceedings; and although their associations had no object immediately political, yet it was easy to perceive with what facility they might have been converted to such an end. This spirit of outrage appeared, at an early period of the year, under various forms and denominations in different parts of the country; but, by a vigorous and steady administration of justice, it was, in almost every instance, effectually put down. The associations had all one common object—the dominion of the mob over property. Sometimes the rent of land was the subject of their legislation; at others, the tithes of the protestant and the dues of the catholic clergy were regulated by their arbitrary decrees.—These outrages, which so frequently occur in Ireland, must, in some measure, be ascribed to the conduct of the Irish proprietors, but chiefly to the shameful state of ignorance in which the people are allowed to remain. It is not because the lower orders in Ireland pay heavy taxes, or because they are in other respects oppressed, that at regular intervals their untamed spirits seek an outlet in acts of violence and rebellion; it is because their conduct is not watched over by their superiors; because a mistaken lenity is too often shewn in the execution of the laws; and, above all, because the example of

the higher orders, which might soften and refine the manners of the peasantry, is wanting in this fine country Were the nobility and gentry of Ireland to exert themselves with more zeal in the education of their tenantry; were they to reside on their estates and dispense justice among the lower orders mildly but firmly; were they, by their example and intercourse, to create a taste among the lower Irish for the comforts and conveniences of life, the bloodshed and outrage of every kind, which so much disgrace the annals of this country, would quickly disappear, and Ireland would no longer form an exception to the general character of the European nations, which, during the last century, have advanced so muchin refinement.

But the grand question in Irish politics is that of catholic emancipation—a question which, having unfortunately divided contending factions, has been raised into artificial importance, and pursued with a heat and animosity which bid defiance to sober discussion. The leaders of a powerful, but disappointed, party in England, have avowed themselves the champions of the catholic cause, which they have found so convenient an instrument of annoyance to the administration, that it is no wonder if they prosecute it with the utmost zeal and industry.—Early in the session of this year, they intimated their desire to bring forward the catholic claims for the discussion of parliament; and they assigned, as a reason for this precipitation, a wish that the Prince Regent might know their opinions as distinctly as he knew those of his ministers. This was by many persons thought to be a shallow pretext for embarrassing the government at a season of great difficulty, since the Prince had long been acquainted with the sentiments of both parties on the merits of this great controversy. There were many who attributed the haste of the opposition to different motives. At the opening of the present session they could not well attack the conduct of the war,—they could not, with much satisfaction, advert to the state of the peninsula,—nor could they indulge in speculations which had lost much of their credit with the country; but as they were anxious that the session should not open without a contest, they had no choice but to bring forward the catholic claims.

Many strange allusions were made about this time to certain promises which it was said the Prince Regent had given on this subject; yet no one could state specifically where, when, and to whom the prince had thus pledged himself. Could his royal highness legally or constitutionally have pledged himself on such a question? Could he have declared that at a future period, and in any circumstances, he would be disposed to concede the catholic claims? Assuredly his royal highness neither did give, nor could have given, such a pledge; and it was not less unconstitutional than indecent to make such allusions.

The sentiments even of the advocates of this great cause were far from being consistent; some of them were ready to surrender every thing at once, while others would have made the surrender conditional. Lord Grenville, a powerful and steady advocate of the catholic claims, considered the *veto* to be indispensable; he maintained that the crown ought to have an effectual negative on the appointment of the catholic bishops,—"a condition (added his lordship) intended to meet the just expectations not of any bigoted interested champions of intolerance, but of men of the purest intentions and most enlightened judgments;

men willing to do all justice to the loyalty of the Irish bishops, but not unreasonably alarmed at any possibility by which functions of such extensive influence might hereafter be connected with a foreign interest hostile to the tranquillity of our country,—a danger lately very much increased by the captivity and disposal of the head of the catholic church,—by the seizure of his dominions, and by the declared intention of a hostile government to assume in future the exclusive nomination of his successors." Such was the language of Lord Grenville on one occasion; and when he introduced his motion on the catholic petition in May, 1808, he pronounced an opinion on the question of the *veto* not less decided. "Much has been said elsewhere of the influence of their bishops; and in a former debate even in this house, great stress was laid on the danger of a catholic hierarchy. If you tolerate the catholic church, which is episcopal, you must, of course, allow it to have its bishops. But it is unquestionably proper that the crown should exercise an effectual negative over the appointment of persons called to execute these functions. To this the catholics of Ireland declared themselves perfectly willing to accede. The precise mode of giving effect to the principle will best be settled by the wisdom of parliament. It is fit matter for discussion in such a committee as I propose. The declaration of the catholics on this subject is an unquestionable proof of their solicitude to meet the kindness of their fellow-subjects, and accede to any practical means of removing even the most groundless jealousies. As such, I rejoice that it has been made, and I see with infinite satisfaction the just impression which it has universally produced. To me it is not new; I always felt the propriety of providing for this point. The experience of other countries proves both its expediency and its practicability; it formed a part of the plans intended to be brought forward at the period of the Union; and what we then knew of the sentiments of the catholics respecting it, left no doubt upon our minds that the matter might be easily and satisfactorily adjusted." Such were at one time the sentiments of Lord Grenville; but they appear to have subsequently undergone a very considerable change. In the course of one of the debates on the catholic question which ensued during the present session of parliament, Earl Grey declared that neither he nor Lord Grenville "had ever considered the *veto* to be indispensable." It was perhaps to such a change of opinion as this,—a change at once unexpected and unaccountable,—a change for which neither the state of the country nor the conduct of the catholics seemed to afford any plausible reason, that the whig leaders alluded, when they declared at the opening of the session their resolution to bring forward without delay the catholic question, in order that the Regent and the country might know their opinions on the subject.

They accordingly brought forward the question at a very early period of the session. On the 31st of January, Earl Fitzwilliam made a motion in the House of Lords that the House should resolve itself into a committee to take into consideration the present situation of affairs in Ireland. By this motion it was intended not only to bring the catholic question into discussion, but to convey a severe censure on the recent conduct of the Irish government, which had exerted itself successfully to put down the catholic convention.

This convention had presumed of

late to discuss not only the catholic claims, but the whole policy of the empire; and it were superfluous to endeavour to prove the right of the Irish government to suppress it. It is a principle of common sense, which requires no support from an act of the legislature, that a system of delegation not regulated by the laws, must at all times prove extremely dangerous; that if the people can be brought together through the medium of representatives not acting under the authority of the constitution, their proceedings must give just cause of alarm; and that no set of men can presume to represent the nation except those who are chosen to serve in parliament according to the constitution of the country. The very *principle* of delegation, therefore, cannot be recognized, because if it were once admitted, a small number of factious and discontented persons might acquire an influence over the body of the people quite inconsistent with the stability of a regular government. It were vain to say that such men had been collected together merely for the purpose of preparing the catholic petition, or of performing any other lawful act; for as it must be evident that their efforts may, with the greatest ease, be devoted to other purposes, their meetings can never be constitutional, even if it could not be proved that in point of fact they had deviated from the avowed and legitimate object of their assembling. But those who on this occasion contended for resenting so audacious an insult on the constitution, did not confine themselves to general and abstract topics; an act of the Irish parliament had been passed with the express view of putting down assemblies of this kind, which had already on more than one occasion threatened the tranquillity of Ireland. The Irish government was therefore called upon to exert its best efforts in support of the laws; and if any argument could have been wanting to induce the ministers to act with vigour, surely the conduct of the catholic delegates themselves was such as to rouse in them all the energy of which they were capable. The members of the catholic parliament who presumed to discuss the whole affairs not only of the catholic community, but of the Irish nation, did not content themselves with preparing a petition for the redress of the catholic grievances, but wandered into the most violent discussions on every subject which was calculated to raise the passions of the multitude, and to hurry them into acts of insurrection. The ministers, therefore, determined to put the convention act in force; but they were anxious also that this measure of necessary vigour should be preceded by a most careful enquiry into the character and views of those against whom it was directed, and by paternal warnings to the people to be on their guard against the delusions which prevailed among them. Notwithstanding the accusations, therefore, which were brought against the Irish government by Earl Fitzwilliam in the House of Lords, and by Lord Milton in the House of Commons, it may be asserted with confidence that it was acting in the strict discharge of an important duty; that it was merely exercising a power which would have belonged to it independently of any special enactment, but which had at all events been distinctly conferred by an express provision of the legislature.

The history of this statute, of which so much has been said, may be explained in a few words. In a season of great turbulence, when the same artifices by which the demagogues of Ireland now endeavoured to convulse the country had been put in practice, the legislature found itself compelled to declare, in a more

formal manner, the common law of the land, by denouncing those societies which, under false pretences, were endeavouring to usurp the powers of the legislature, and to subvert the laws and constitution of the country; by declaring, in short, that any convention implying the principles of delegation, is illegal and unconstitutional. In that season of anarchy, it was the practice of these demagogues to assemble in their representative capacity under the pretence of petitioning parliament; the convention act, however, expressly declared, that all those who should assemble in this manner, and under such pretences, should be held guilty of a misdemeanour, and should incur certain penalties. Such was the origin of the statute which the Irish ministers resolved to enforce.

When the Irish government determined to put down the catholic parliament, after its proceedings had excited great alarm, and the measure of its transgressions against the laws had been completed, various futile pretexts were set up in defence of the delinquents. The convention act, it was said, provided only for the dispersion of such assemblies as were convened under the *pretence* of petitioning; but the catholic delegates had not assembled under any pretence, but had met for the real and serious purpose of preparing the catholic petition.—The answer to this reasoning, however, was twofold. The act had manifestly proscribed all assemblies brought together under the forms of representation; and it could be of no importance that these illegal assemblies attempted to cover their designs by a mere pretence—by affecting to be engaged in preparing petitions to the legislature. The act declared, that they fraudulently availed themselves of a privilege, the exercise of which is otherwise quite lawful, to embark in projects which the laws of no well-regulated country can ever permit.—There was no necessity, therefore, for proving that the real objects of these assemblies was not that of petitioning, for the statute directly announced that the privilege of petitioning,—a privilege which in other circumstances may be legally exercised,—was by such representatives employed as a mask to conceal their illegal proceedings. It was enough to convict the catholic delegates under the law, that they adopted a mode of preparing their petition which was in itself unconstitutional, and which a special statute had declared to be illegal.—But there was little need for entering on such arguments in discussing the case of the catholic delegates, since, so far from confining themselves to the mere object of petitioning, they had maliciously entertained, and discussed with the greatest violence, not only every question connected with the domestic affairs of Ireland, but with the general policy of the empire. The conduct of the Irish government, therefore, in putting down the convention, was not only justifiable, but laudable in the highest degree; and its advocates had no very difficult task in making a firm and vigorous defence against the groundless charges which were brought forward at the beginning of the session.

It was an unfortunate circumstance for the supporters of the motions, that the general question of catholic emancipation had been blended with the enquiry into the conduct of the Irish government. If a motion had been temperately brought forward for the consideration of the catholic claims,—if the question had been agitated in the spirit of fairness, and with a view to deliberate discussion, there was a chance that the motion might have been received and referred to a com-

mittee. But such was the conduct of those to whom, unfortunately the interests of Ireland were at this time committed—such was their hostility to the administration, and so severe were the terms in which they arraigned the measures of government, that it would seem as if they had exerted themselves to make the ministers their enemies, and to kindle a feeling of the most lively resentment against their own cause. They blamed the Irish government for the efforts which it had ade to secure the peace of the country,—they actively and warmly took the part of those who had endeavoured to inflame the minds of the Irish populace; and with such topics of discussion, they most indiscreetly combined the great question of catholic emancipation. Those who were really interested on principle in the success of the catholic petitions,—those who fairly and honourably desired that this great question might be put to rest for the sake of the security and happiness of the empire; the catholics themselves, and all who were inclined to support them on fair and honourable principles, must have disapproved of such proceedings. The consequences were such as might have been expected; both the motions were rejected by a very large majority.

Such was the fate of this attack upon the conduct of the Irish government; but the catholic question was not so easily disposed of. As this subject, however, has become of such magnitude in the politics of the country—as it was so often discussed during the course of this session of parliament, and occasioned so brilliant a display of talent and eloquence, a more expanded view of it is reserved for a separate chapter, which shall be entirely devoted to a question, which, in the course of this year, filled the public mind with the utmost anxiety. But before interrupting the narration, it will be necessary to complete the outline of the parliamentary proceedings on the subject of the catholic claims.

On the 21st of April, Lord Donoughmore moved in the House of Lords, "That a committee should be appointed to take into consideration, the laws imposing civil disabilities on his majesty's subjects professing the catholic religion, and that the petition of the Irish catholics and protestants, as well as of the English catholics and dissenters, should be referred to a committee." On the 23d of the same month, Mr Grattan made a similar motion in the House of Commons, which was followed by a very full and able discussion. A considerable majority, however, appeared in both houses of parliament against the motions.—On the 22d of June, Mr Canning concluded an eloquent speech, by moving, that the House of Commons "should, early in the next session of parliament, take into its most serious consideration, the state of the laws affecting his majesty's catholic subjects in Great Britain and Ireland, with a view to such a final and conciliatory adjustment as might be conducive to the peace and strength of the united kingdoms, to the stability of the protestant establishment, and to the satisfaction and concord of all classes of his majesty's subjects." This motion was, after an able debate, carried by a majority of 129; and it was generally supposed that the catholic cause had thus obtained a complete and permanent triumph. And the question might indeed have been carried about this period, had it not been for the folly of some persons whom the catholics had unhappily permitted to interfere with their affairs. But while Mr Canning's motion was under discussion in the House of Commons, some resolutions passed by a catholic meeting in Dublin, made their appearance, demanding the unqualified con-

cession of the catholic claims, as a matter of right, declaring that nothing less would satisfy the catholics of Ireland, and threatening their enemies with the most exemplary vengeance. The Catholic Board, as this strange association is pleased to style itself, was even imprudent enough to avow, that these resolutions had been known in London before the vote was taken on Mr Canning's motion; and to boast, that the violence of an Irish convention had intimidated the House of Commons in the late memorable debate. These wild measures which were pursued by the demagogues in Dublin, and not disavowed by those whom they pretended to represent, had great influence on the British legislature; and when the Marquis Wellesley brought forward in the House of Lords, a motion precisely in the same terms with that which Mr Canning had carried in the House of Commons, it was negatived, although by a very small majority.—The temper of the legislature, and of the country at this period, might thus have ensured the triumph of the catholic cause, had the petitioners themselves behaved even with tolerable prudence; but they gave themselves up to the management of deperate men, and they found the legislature prepared to put down their daring pretensions. They were thus taught a lesson, which it is to be hoped they will long remember—that threats and violence will be of no service to their cause; that it is their interest to disengage themselves from the unhappy connections which they have imprudently formed; that it is their duty to disavow the lawless proceedings of their self-elected representatives, and that the British parliament has too much virtue ever to yield to the insolence of faction or the frenzy of rebellion.

Thus were the fairest prospects of the catholics blasted by their own imprudence, and their hopes of a speedy recovery of their privileges removed to a greater distance than before. They very soon became sensible of the errors which had been committed by the late aggregate meeting; and some of the more respectable members lost no time in calling an extraordinary meeting, to rescind the resolutions which had given so much offence. This meeting was attended by some of the most respectable of the Irish catholic gentlemen, who regretted that they had been absent from the late aggregate meeting, and declared in the most pointed terms their disapprobation of the resolutions, and their apprehensions of the dangerous consequences which might result from an act of such consummate folly.

The feelings of the protestants in England were strongly roused by the result of the discussion on Mr Canning's motion; and threatening letters were sent to some members of opposition, on account of the facility with which they had conceded the catholic claims. It was thought that their exertions had contributed to the late result which was so much deprecated; that they had spared no pains to promote that object, and had sometimes condescended to make a question of general and serious interest, one of mere party politics.—There was no reason, indeed, to believe that the recent proceedings in the House of Commons were warmly approved by the people, since not a single petition had been presented from any county or corporate body in England in favour of the catholic claims. It was supposed, therefore, that if the question had taken the same turn in the House of Lords, which it did in the Commons, a very strong sensation would have been produced; and that although the people of Great Britain had remained passive so long as they imagined that they had no reason to

dread the concession of the catholic claims, they might have been roused to very serious outrages, had the concessions been actually made.—An impression prevailed at this time, that the leaders of the different parties had found it convenient to enter into a kind of compromise on the subject; that they had agreed to barter away the constitution; that whatever was catholic, had been erroneously considered by them as liberal and tolerant, while the protestants had been unjustly described as mere bigots and persecutors. Many persons were disgusted with the conduct of the catholics themselves, who refused to receive concession as a favour, and claimed every thing as matter of right; who rejected all conditions with contempt, and imperiously dictated to the legislature in what was emphatically described as the genuine spirit of catholic arrogance and ambition. It was insinuated, that the late concession had been unfairly made; that the country had not been told the whole truth; that the question did not relate to the mere granting of a few privileges and places—that the catholic religion was to become the religion of the state in Ireland, and that the measures now pursued would be found to be mere preliminary steps to the dissolution of the union, and the separation of the two countries.—There can be no doubt, indeed, that such principles were avowed by some of the Irish demagogues; and not only was this circumstance strongly insisted on, but the whole acts and proceedings of the catholic committee were recapitulated, as affording decisive evidence, that their views must naturally and inevitably lead to the most disastrous results.

It must, no doubt, be confessed, that the conduct of some demagogues, who had at least the indirect sanction of the catholics, was in the highest degree indiscreet and insultin

So soon as the intelligence of the result of Mr Canning's motion reached Ireland, they proclaimed not only that the resolutions of the aggregate meeting had influenced the vote of the House of Commons, but that the vote itself amounted to a pledge that the resolutions to their full extent would be carried into effect. "The House of Commons," said they, "stands pledged to the early consideration of the laws affecting the catholics; that pledge was given with a full knowledge of the resolutions at the last aggregate meeting in Fishamble-street; let the cabinet bring forward the so-much-talked-of securities; the catholics of Ireland have irrevocably determined not to give any security." They added, that "they would not enter into any treaty; that they would not stoop to any compromise;" and from such declarations, it was inferred, that the success of the catholic question was not what the leading agitators desired. They hoped that the legislature would insist on having securities; while the catholics might be prevailed upon to refuse them; and they fondly believed that animosity and disturbance, the dissolution of the union, and the separation of the two countries, might be the consequence. They recommended to the catholic freeholders to oppose any candidate, who should not pledge himself to support the catholic question, or who should have lent, or was likely to lend, his support to the administration; so that whatever measures were proposed by the ministers, were to be systematically resisted by men who designated the protestants as intolerant persecutors and bigots. By such proceedings the catholics failed to attain the object which they had so much at heart. Some illustrious members of the House of Lords, among whom was the Duke of Cumberland, expressly declared, that they voted against Lord Welles-

ley's motion, on account of the disgust and alarm which had been excited by the conduct of the catholics; and an opportunity for the fair and deliberate discussion of this great subject, which may not soon recur, was thus thrown away by a combination of insolence and folly, which has seldom been paralleled.

Mr Parnell, towards the close of the session, brought forward a motion, "That the House should early next session of parliament take into its most serious consideration, the state of the laws relating to tithes in Ireland, with a view to a legislative measure conducive to the relief of the lower orders of the people, and the more satisfactory provision of the clergy of the established church." In support of this motion it was stated, that nine of the largest counties of Ireland had presented petitions, or had publicly declared, that some alteration in the present system was indispensable; that the same opinion prevailed very generally throughout Ireland, and that even the clergy themselves were desirous of relief. That the state of Ireland renders the levying of tithes in that country a much more intolerable burden, than the same exactions are in England; that one-tenth only of the Irish people belong to the established church; that nine-tenths of them accordingly pay for two establishments; and that although the catholics had, from a sense of delicacy, declined interfering in this question, they were undoubtedly the chief sufferers in the present state of things: That the practice of enforcing payment of tithes in Ireland is but of modern date, a circumstance which very much increases the grievance; that even down to the present time the clergy had not been able to enforce the payment of tithes on many articles on which they are due by the ecclesiastical interpretation of the law; and that the lands in Ireland of course are not sold and bought as in England, subject to a deduction of one-tenth of the produce to the church: That a great uncertainty thus arises as to what things are tithable, and what tithe is payable on them; that new incumbents frequently alter the former charges, which is a source of great oppression to the land-holder; and that useless litigation thus ensues, highly prejudicial not only to the character of the church, but to the comfort of the people: That the lower orders in Ireland are in general holders of land, which they keep in tillage, and which is of course liable to tithes; that the great farmers have almost all their lands in pasture, and are thus exempted; and that the burden of the tithes in Ireland of course falls chiefly on the poorer classes: That the clergy are obliged to employ tithe-proctors and tithe-farmers to collect their tithes, who proceed with the greatest rigour, and occasion the most serious discontent: That the great evils of which the Irish complain do not arise so much either from the absence of their gentry, or the character of the middlemen, as from the grievance now stated; and although the laws protect most effectually the tenant in his dealing with his landlord, they place him with respect to tithes wholly at the mercy of the clergy. There is no reason to believe that some remedy for this evil may not easily be discovered, since it is well known that Mr Pitt had prepared a plan for the commutation of tithes in Ireland, which, if it had been carried into effect, must have been attended with the happiest consequences.—Mr Parnell then suggested that the evil might be remedied in various ways. First, by a valuation of tithes by commissioners, agreeably to the precedents of former acts of parliament. Secondly, by a certain tax on lands now subject to tithes equivalent to the value of the tithes

at present received. Thirdly, by a provision to protect the clergy against changes in the value of money, on the principle of 18th Elizabeth, chap. 6, for securing to the universities the value of their lands by making the price of corn the criterion of the rents received.—Mr Parnell, however, suggested that in the first instance a certain tax should be imposed on each grower in lieu of the tithes, an arrangement being made at the same time by which lands should be purchased so soon as they could be procured, and granted to the church as the final equivalent for the tithes. He proposed that the tax should be paid to government as a return for the sums necessary to be advanced to purchase the lands; and maintained that this measure would contribute to the stability of the established church, which could never be safe, while the increase of its income generated so much discontent; that it would enable Ireland to extend her tillage, and supply England with the corn which she does not grow for her own consumption; and would promote the internal tranquillity of Ireland, conciliate the people, and extend the resources of the empire.—The difficulties, however, which opposed themselves to the execution of any of these plans, and which were pointed out by Mr Wellesley Pole and other members, seemed to be nearly insurmountable. The clergy of Ireland enjoy, in point of fact, between a twentieth and a thirtieth part of the produce; in many cases not more than a thirtieth. But in a commutation, it would be impossible to proceed upon any other principle, than that of allowing the clergy what they are entitled to by law, viz. a tenth of the produce. If they should not receive this they would receive less than their right, and if they were allowed a tenth, the people of Ireland must pay more than the double of what they at present contribute. As no commutation, therefore, could be effected without increasing the burdens of the Irish people, it seemed highly inexpedient to urge any plan of this kind, at a moment when the supposed oppressions existing in this part of the empire had attracted so much notice and produced so much discontent.—Mr Parnell's motion was therefore negatived; and the project of relieving Ireland from an evil of acknowledged magnitude, and of difficult remedy, was for the present abandoned.

CHAP. VIII.

The Catholic Question. Arguments for and against the Claims of the Catholics. Reflections on the Subject, and on the future Prospects of that Body.

THE question of catholic emancipation has of late years occupied a very prominent place in the deliberations of the legislature, and in the domestic politics of the country. The interest naturally excited by a discussion of great intrinsic importance, has been enhanced by the stormy violence with which the claims of the catholics have been pursued, and perpetuated by the bitter divisions in the state, of which the catholic question has become the badge. During the year 1812, the claims of the catholics were sustained and opposed in parliament with an energy and enthusiasm, which have seldom been equalled; many conflicts took place in which the very highest talents of the country were drawn into vigorous operation; and some powerful and brilliant orations were pronounced, which would be altogether spoiled by abridgement. Such, besides, is the nature of the subject, that no attempt to abridge the pleadings could escape the imputation of partiality,—a charge which might have a better foundation in justice than even the author had suspected. Yet how imperfect would any account of the transactions of this period be, which preserved no vestige of the general state of public sentiment on a subject of such magnitude; which entirely disregarded the new lights struck out in the collision of the most powerful minds, contending with ardour in a cause so momentous; and neglected so fair an opportunity of commemorating, in some degree at least, the high endowments of those men, who, even in an age so often described as comparatively barren in great public characters, continued to shed a lustre round the British senate. It must also be recollected, that the chief arguments on both sides of this great question have already met the public eye in so many shapes, that a mere abridgement would disgust as an useless repetition; but there is in the vigour and animation of a speech actually pronounced by a great orator on an interesting occasion, a virtue which will give freshness even to stale arguments, and the highest possible relish to sentiments which have novelty as well as truth to recommend them. Among those who distinguished themselves in the course of the present year in support of the claims of the catholics, the Marquis Wellesley and Mr Canning stood pre-eminent, and, by the acknowledgement even of the old advocates of catholic emancipation, added new honour to their name. Their speeches will be read with interest and

delight even by persons (if there be any such) who care little about the issue of the discussion; while the grave and sober argument of some of their opponents may teach the vulgar advocates of emancipation, that the question is not so clear of difficulties as they imagine, and that there may be greater dangers in a headlong impetuosity, than they have penetration enough to discover.

When Lord Morpeth brought forward his motion on the state of Ireland and the claims of the catholics, Mr Canning rose after Sir John Nichol, and spoke as follows:—

"In approaching the discussion of this great question, I am aware that I labour under many disadvantages. The feelings and passions of men are so warmly interested on the one side or other, that to engage in the discussion without adopting, in some measure, the views and language of a partizan, is, I am perfectly sensible, to incur the risk of disappointing both parties and pleasing neither. But this disadvantage I am not afraid to encounter. If I know my own heart, I come to the present question uninfluenced by any selfish motives, by any objects either of power or popularity. I wish merely to do my duty. I seek not the triumph of either party, but I look to the tranquillity, the security, and the happiness of the whole.

"Much has been said, in the various debates that have taken place on this subject, of promises made, or understandings entered into, at the time of the Union. Promises, I know of none; nor do I believe that any were made. An understanding there certainly was, not expressed by any act of the legislature, but fairly to be collected from the language of almost every man who spoke in favour of the Union in either house of parliament;—that, whereas the separate resident legislature of Ireland, surrounded and agitated by local passions and prejudices, was incompetent to discuss, impartially and dispassionately, the subject of the catholic claims,—the imperial parliament, after the accomplishment of the Union, being removed from the influence of those local feelings, and from the sphere of those prejudices which obstructed a temperate discussion in Ireland, might safely and conveniently entertain the question, and might come to a rational and enlightened decision upon it.

"That time arrived. The Union being accomplished, the question was open to discussion in the united parliament; when an obstacle arose, to the nature of which it would not be fitting to do more than allude; but of which I believe it may be said, without hazard of contradiction, that, however it might impede for a time the consummation of their wishes, there is no virtuous and loyal catholic who does not deeply deplore its removal.

"Is it at this moment, when the expectations, well or ill founded, under which the Union was brought about, might be realized,—when the claims of the catholics might at length, without impediment, be submitted to parliamentary consideration—is it at this moment that my right honourable and learned friend (Sir John Nichol) would break the word of promise to the hopes of the catholics, and shut the door against their expectations for ever? I do not say that the claims of the catholics can this day be granted. I do not say with my noble friend (Lord Morpeth) that this is the moment for taking them into consideration. I agree, indeed, with my noble friend as to the great and urgent importance of the subject; but I rather think my noble friend does not agree with me as to the magnitude of the difficulties that

encompass it. But whatever doubt I may entertain as to the view which my noble friend has taken of the subject, however much I may be disposed to question whether he has considered it in all its details, and in all its bearings, I must own, that my right honourable and learned friend (Sir J. Nichol) has done so much to simplify the question, —that if, of the two, I must agree with the one or the other, I could not refuse my noble friend the preference. If the only option were, whether we should go on at once to the extremest limit of concession, or should presently retrace our steps, retract former relaxations, and re-enact former disabilities, I could have no hesitation as to the alternative for which I should give my vote.

"But in the view which I take of this great question, it is not quite so simple in its nature. It cannot, I think, be considered without reference to times and circumstances. It is not to be decided on abstract principles alone. Those principles must be modified in their application by a view of the actual state of Ireland;—of the relation in which Ireland now stands to the whole of the British empire;—and of the situation of that empire, as affected by the present circumstances of the world.

"When I look to the present state of Ireland, with a great and growing population,—a population growing, not in numbers only, but in wealth and intelligence; and aspiring, from what they have already tasted of freedom, to a more enlarged and equal enjoyment of privileges from which they are still excluded;—when I consider that to this situation, they have been gradually raised, from a condition wherein no class of people had ever before been placed by the laws of a Christian country, I cannot think it probable, that in this situation they should long contentedly continue. Neither can I think it wise, if it were practicable, to determine upon permanently shutting them out from the pale of the constitution.

"It is admitted, that since the period of their humiliation, the catholics have disclaimed many of the tenets which were once imputed to them, and which formed the justification of that system of depression under which they were formerly holden. But my right honourable and learned friend, takes what appears to me rather an unfair advantage of the good behaviour of the catholics, and attributes it exclusively to the beneficial operation of the restrictive laws. He does not distinctly avow indeed the intention of restoring those laws; but such, as I have already said, is the course and tendency of his reasoning; and no man who follows the argument to its legitimate consequences, can doubt that this is in fact the implied doctrine of those who think with my right honourable and learned friend. The more the catholic was restricted, says my right honourable and learned friend, the more quiet he became. This may possibly be true; but it is a truth, which, if we took it as the guide of our policy, might lead us a little too far. It seems somewhat a-kin to the old adage, that "dead men tell no tales;" for it must be granted, that the man in whom the best powers and faculties of life, civil freedom, and all the social passions, were extinguished, was likely to be quiet enough.

"But does my right honourable and learned friend really think that such a system was politic? or that whatever it might have been, when justified, or supposed to be justified, by necessity,—it would be politic to revive or to persevere in it now? Would he again place the catholic in a situation in which he should not have the right of

bequeathing his own property; of educating his own children; of exercising any of the rights—I will not say of a freeman, but of a manumitted slave? Would he thus undo the work of beneficence which has so honourably distinguished the present reign? For during the present reign it is, and during the latter half of it, that the catholic has been raised from so abject a situation to his present comparatively improved, but imperfect enjoyment of civil privileges. Or does my right honourable and learned friend only think that these wise and salutary regulations, though abolished, ought not to be forgotten? that though we have partially, perhaps improvidently, removed the weight of the chain from the limbs of the catholic, we ought to leave a link or two behind, to remind him that he was once in fetters?

"But without defending, in all their disgusting detail, those numerous penalties and disabilities under which the catholics formerly laboured, my right honourable and learned friend contents himself with asking, whether what was once so essentially necessary to the security of the state, and so conducive to its tranquillity, can now be safely cancelled as useless? For my own part, I answer that I cannot see, even in the circumstances of the past times, a sufficient apology for the past system. I cannot conceive any state of society in which such restrictions could be absolutely justified. I could not, in any state of things which my imagination can suggest, in a civilized country, among citizens of the same soil, approve of such means of producing tranquillity. I could not give my voice for the policy [illegible] propping up the state by dissocia[illegible] half its subjects from the charities of human life; from the ties of kindred; from the confidence of familiarity and friendship; from all that endears society to man, and connects him, through his family, with his country. I think such a system must at all times have been as mischievous in politics as detestable in morality, however effectually it may have tranquillized the population which it proscribed.

"But excuses, though not justifications, might perhaps exist in a former state of things, which do not exist now. The system itself might be defended by arguments, which do not apply to the fragments of that system, broken down and scattered as it has been in these latter times by the silent progress of events, and by the growing liberality of the legislature. The *onus* lies, says my right honourable and learned friend, on those who call for innovation, to show that there is ground for innovating, and that we can innovate with safety. The *onus* lies, it may be answered, on those who recommend the preserving, with such perverse partiality, the disjointed frame of a machine, according to their own confession no longer efficient for the purposes of coercion and consequent tranquillity. Would they preserve what they admit and regret to be mutilated, and inoperative, as matter of example, or of warning, to future ages? or as matter of pride and credit to the legislative contrivance of our ancestors? Are they anxious that posterity may be enabled to conjecture, from its remains, how formidable the force of the whole complicated instrument must have been when it existed in all its terrible perfection, and was worked with an unsparing hand?

"My right honourable and learned friend and I differ in nothing so much as in this, that he views and has argued this question as if it were solely a religious question, whereas I feel it my duty to argue it in this House upon political grounds alone. My right honourable and learned friend has indeed declared (and seemed to take credit for the candour of the declara-

tion) that he would not go into the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the adoration of saints, or other mysterious points of the popish faith. But why did he not go into them? Because he in effect took them for granted; and argued from them without submitting to the inconvenience of proving them. I am sure I cannot undertake to follow my right honourable and learned friend, for the purpose of either confuting or confirming his construction of the objectionable tenets of the Romish church; nor does it appear to me necessary or useful to enter into that disquisition. It would be better suited to a convocation of divines, than to an assembly of legislators. When the legislature selected those points—transubstantiation and the like—as tests, and as the foundations of their provisions against the admission of papists into the state, it was surely not in the spirit of religious controversy,—not as intending to dispute with priests and bishops upon the mysteries of their faith. It was not intended by those who originated the catholic disqualifications, to decide on abstract points of theology. They took these articles of religious creed as the signs of political opinion; as the distinguishing characteristics of a faction in the state, acting under a foreign influence, connected with a banished dynasty, and hostile to the government and the constitution of their country. They were the marks by which the criminal was designated, not the crime for which he was punished.

"In tracing the history of the penal laws, and of the long sufferings of Ireland, some gentlemen are fond of going back to remote and almost forgotten periods; to periods when Ireland was treated as a conquered country, and groaned under all those injuries and oppressions which grew, not out of religious schism, but out of political and military subjugation. I do not think it necessary to go so far back either to recount the wrongs of Ireland, or to suggest the remedy for them. As reasonable would it be to refer to the Norman conquest for grievances applicable to this country, and to complain at this time of the day of the tyranny of the curfew. But part of the way I must go back, to find the origin and object of the restrictions now under consideration. I must go back as far as the Reformation.

"Blessed as that great event was in its general consequences to mankind, and eminently so to this country, by purifying religion of the gross corruptions and abuses which had been engrafted upon it, and introducing among us that enlightened and rational system of religious worship which we now happily enjoy; yet, like all great and violent changes in the state of human affairs, it was not productive of unmixed good, but brought with it a portion of inevitable evil. It strengthened the religious principle, but it weakened throughout Europe, for a time, the principle of patriotism; in some cases superseding it, in others coming in conflict with it. The sects into which the nations of Europe were divided by this event, were influenced by the zeal of religious controversy, more than by the love of country. The attachment of catholics and protestants to their respective persuasions, was often too strong for those ties of duty and affection which bind men to their native clime. In Germany the reformed religion had to struggle against catholic supremacy. In this country, where the doctrines of the Reformation early prevailed, the Catholics continued to feel a community of interest with the catholics of other nations, outweighing that which connected them with their protestant fellow-subjects, the children of the same soil. Under these circumstances, it

might perhaps be necessary for the safety of the state, that the dominant sect should place the others under restrictions and disqualifications which should exclude them from all share in the government, and from all influence as well as power. But it would surely be idle to contend that a transitory dissension required, or could justify, a permanent and irremovable system of coercion. And it would be false in point of history, as well as in reasoning, to affirm that the religious struggles, which naturally grew out of such an event as the Reformation, must be considered as common to all times, and as arising out of causes inseparable from our nature.

"It is true that in this country, and still more in Ireland, from circumstances peculiar to these kingdoms, religious dissensions raged unabated for a longer period than in many other parts of the world. But are there no instances in which difference of faith has been found compatible with strict political union? Within a few years, I believe within thirty years, after the first dawn of the Reformation, and while the rest of Europe was yet convulsed with the divisions arising out of it, the cantons of Switzerland took the sage and generous resolution to bury all religious animosities, and to live together as Christians, without regard to difference of sect. In four of these cantons the reformed religion was adopted; in six the Roman catholic continued to prevail; in the remainder, protestants and catholics were mixed in equal proportions; and in the diets, in which the general affairs of the union were discussed, the two religions amicably concurred in the settlement of their common political interests. From about the middle of the 16th to the beginning of the 18th century, when there was a slight interruption to their harmony, (which interruption lasted, however, only for a period of six months,) and from thence to the time when their independence was swallowed up in the all-devouring gulf of the French Revolution, did the cantons of Switzerland continue to maintain, with this perfect religious independence, a perfect and cordial political connexion.

"It may be objected, that however this might have been the case with states of such trifling magnitude as the Swiss cantons, there would be a difficulty in making the application of the same principle to greater states. But what if the same might be shown of another and a larger country? What if it had existed in France itself? Let not my right honourable and learned friend suppose that I am speaking of revolutionary France; or that I, at least, am one of those whom he has described as borrowing their opinions upon this subject from the new philosophy which gave birth to that tremendous and desolating revolution.—I flatter myself that I am known too well to my right honourable and learned friend, as I would fain presume that I may be to this House, to be under the necessity of defending myself against such an imputation. I speak of France in her ancient, in her most glorious times; not only when she was a monarchy, but when reigned over by the monarch whose name is the most splendid in her history, and the most cherished in the affections of mankind. I speak of the edict of Nantes issued by Henry IV. After sixty years of almost uninterrupted struggle between the two conflicting religions; a struggle of open and avowed war, stained with transactions the most disgraceful to human nature; transactions, the memory of which was calculated to keep alive in the br[east] of the protestants a jealous suspicion of treachery, and an ardent desire of

revenge; and in those of the catholics an apprehension of merited and merciless retaliation. In this state of men's minds in France, differing happily from any thing that exists in Ireland, did Henry IV. think that he did not better provide for the general tranquillity and safety of the state than by extending equal political privileges to all religious descriptions of his subjects. Our squabble and difficulty here is about the admission to a few political offices: Hear, sir, what was the enactment of Henry IV. of France upon that subject.

"The better to unite the affections of all our subjects, as it is our intent to do, and to prevent all complaints in time to come,—

"We declare all those who profess or may hereafter profess the pretended reformed religion, capable of holding and exercising all situations, dignities, offices, and public trusts whatsoever, royal and seignorial, or belonging to the cities or towns of our said kingdom, or to the countries, lands, and lordships in allegiance to us, notwithstanding any oaths to the contrary, and to be indifferently admitted and received into such places; and our courts of parliament and other judges shall content themselves with enquiring into the lives, morals, religion, and honest conversation of those who are or may be invested with offices, as well of one religion as another, without exacting any other oath from them than that in the exercise of their charge, they will well and faithfully serve the king, and keep the ordinances, such as they have been observed heretofore. And as to such of the said situations, trusts, and offices, as are in our own gift, any vacancy arising therein shall be filled up, indifferently and without distinction, by any person capable of executing the same; as being a thing which tends to the uniting of all our subjects. It is our intention likewise, that those of the reformed religion may be admitted into all councils, deliberations, meetings, and functions, which belong to the situations above mentioned, without the possibility of their being, on account of their said religion, rejected or prevented from enjoying the same."

"Such, then, was the opinion of one of the greatest monarchs that ever reigned over that or any other nation, in times when he had not barely to calculate upon possible disturbance and discontent, but to encounter open opposition. His opinion is thus practically shewn to have been, that even in such circumstances, the best course of proceeding was by conciliation. This was his notion of tranquillising a country. Such an authority is surely not to be despised. And, however difficult it may have been found, in times of so much turbulence, to act fully up to the spirit of this benevolent edict, and to hold the balance of impartial toleration with a steady hand, yet no man who compares the period during which the edict of Nantes was in force, with that which succeeded its revocation by Louis XIV., will venture to state that the system of toleration tended to cramp the energies, and blight the prosperity of that kingdom. If the reign of Louis XIV. is always cited as the epoch during which the glory of the French monarchy was matured, if his court was at once the model and the terror of Europe,—it is from that period of his reign, when, under the influence of a mistress and a confessor, he repealed the edict of Nantes, and became the persecutor of his subjects, that we are to date the decline of that glory.

"It is a singular fact, however, that, independently of the edict of Nantes, and even after its revocation, France was allowed to benefit by services,

such as we consider as incompatible with the safety of the dominant religion. Sully was placed at the head of her councils; Turenne, Schomberg, and Saxe, were entrusted with the command of her armies.

"What is it—is there any thing which makes intolerance more natural, or more necessary to this country? Is it that a free state must necessarily be more rigorous in withholding political privileges on account of religious opinions, than a government purely monarchical? I have referred to the history of other countries to show the unsoundness of the proposition, that difference of religious opinions is incompatible with political equality. Our own history will show, that, so far from a contrary system being absolutely natural and necessary to this country, so far from its either being indigenous to the soil, or growing out of the freedom of our constitution, our restrictions upon the Roman catholic religion have generally originated in causes external to this country. I infer, that in proportion as those causes cease to operate, the necessity of those restrictions, and consequently their justification, has become less strong.

"From the period of the Reformation, during the remainder of the 16th, and part of the following century, a considerable portion of the continent was agitated by wars and quarrels of religion. From the time when this country finally adopted the reformed religion, the British government lost no opportunity of expressing its sympathy with those professing the same creed in foreign states, sometimes interfering in their favour by negociations, and sometimes assisting them by arms; and it was in its turn exposed to the machinations of foreign powers of the catholic persuasion, and to the vengeance and intrigue of the catholic church. In this state of things the government naturally entertained a strong and just jealousy of its own catholic subjects; and accordingly we find every attack upon the crown of England, whether by the arms of a foreign catholic power, or by the spiritual head of the catholic church, followed by new and more rigorous restrictions upon the catholics of these kingdoms. In Ireland especially, where the Reformation did not make its way, where it must be confessed that little pains were taken to propagate it, in Ireland, which both from the predominance of the catholic religion, and from its being the most vulnerable point of the British empire, was chiefly the scene of foreign intrigue, and the point of foreign attack, these restrictions were multiplied and enforced with peculiar severity.

"From the reign of Elizabeth downwards even to the present reign, the statute-book exhibits a series of penal provisions, rendered necessary, or assumed to be so, for the purpose of keeping down catholic disaffection; a disaffection of which the dread appears uniformly to have increased in proportion to external danger. The war of Philip against Elizabeth, and that which followed the Revolution in 1688, were alike the era and the occasion of new penal restrictions upon Ireland. But is it not equally true, that the abatement of external danger has allowed a proportionate relaxation in the system of internal jealousy and restraint? Was it not reasonable that it should do so? And has not the fact been conformable to the reason of the thing?

"In 1685, the period of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the shores of this country were covered, with a multitude of fugitives from France, imploring asylum and protection: Fugitives of what description? Protestant clergy. Flying from what? A popish persecution. When the

spirit of popish persecution was thus active abroad, we naturally increased our guards and securities against a similar spirit at home. In 1793 again our shores are covered with a banished clergy. Of what persuasion? Roman catholic. Flying from what? An atheistical persecution.—Were these events calculated to produce similar impressions? Or did they call for similar precautions? Undoubtedly they did not. And blind indeed must those persons be to the signs of the times, who would apply to cases so different the same reasoning, or act upon them by an undistinguishing and inflexible rule of conduct.

"But, sir, we did not so reason or so act. The year 1793, the period to which I have last referred, when the dissension of catholic and protestant appeared to be swallowed up in the wider difference between christian and anti-christian:—that was the period chosen, and wisely chosen, by the crown, for recommending to the legislature of Ireland, the relaxation of the penal laws against the Irish catholics. The lesser danger disappeared before the greater; and the restraints which were no longer necessary, were properly considered as no longer just.

"As much was done for the Irish catholics at this period as perhaps could be done, while England and Ireland continued separate kingdoms. The question of admission into political office was wisely, if not of necessity, deferred till after the Union. The Union happily did away that argument from numbers, which, in my judgment, has been always as unwisely urged on one side of this question, as unfairly answered on the other. Most unwisely is it urged by the friends of the catholics; for the boast of numbers sounds too like an attempt at intimidation; but most unfairly is it held out on the other side, to intimidate us the other way, and to induce us to withhold even what it might be right to grant, because the claimants form a large proportion of our population.

"The Union, however, puts an end to the danger of this argument, without destroying whatever is its legitimate force. The numbers of the Irish catholics, merged in the whole population of the united kingdom, have ceased to be formidable from their relative, without ceasing to be respectable from their positive amount.

"Such being the advantage derived to this question from the Union, I confess I am astonished to find, that some among the catholics call for a repeal of the Union; and that an honourable gentleman, a strenuous advocate of the catholic cause, has given notice of a motion to that effect.—Repeal the Union! Restore the heptarchy as soon!—The measure itself is simply impossible. But with such a question depending in the House, I doubt how far it is possible to entertain the consideration of the present subject to any useful purpose. For, suppose the honourable gentleman to succeed in procuring the repeal of the Union, not only might it become unsafe to concede the catholic claims at all, but in this House we could not even discuss them with propriety. This House could not presume to determine on a subject which would then belong to separate Ireland alone.

"Scarcely less unfair than the use of the argument derived from numbers, is that which is often made of the concessions heretofore granted to the catholics by the legislature. It is affirmed, that those concessions have been extorted in times of trouble and danger; that advantage has been taken of the distresses of the crown, to bring forward claims at the moment when it had no means of resisting them. Nothing can be more untrue than this statement; which proceeds

entirely on a confusion between the claims of Ireland, as against England, and those of the catholics of Ireland, which are totally different things. I will not now enter into any enquiry, whether the concessions made to Ireland in 1782, were or were not wrung from the British government by the necessities and difficulties of the times. It is sufficient to remark, that those concessions were not concessions to the catholics, but to the protestant parliament of Ireland; that in the boasted adjustment (as it was called) of 1782, not one word was contained which ameliorated the situation of the catholics, or in any degree affected their interests. So far is it from being true, that what has been granted to them has been granted to menace, that it has not, in point of fact, been granted even to supplication. Their petitions had been rejected by the Irish parliament; and the crown afterwards voluntarily came forward, and suggested to that parliament a spontaneous compliance with the prayers which it had previously refused. And to this is to be added, that in almost every statute which has passed to improve the situation of the catholics, their uniformly peaceable and loyal conduct has been recited in the preamble, as occasioning and justifying the concession.

"In looking at the nature and extent of the concessions which have thus been made to the catholics, and at the state in which they were left at the Union, will any man contend, that the point at which those concessions have stopped can have been selected as that at which it was seriously intended they should remain? Is it not obvious upon the slightest consideration, that to have opened the elective franchise to the catholics, and to preclude the exercise of it in favour of candidates of their own persuasion; that to have admitted them to the bar, and to exclude them from the bench, would, if considered as a permanent arrangement, be one of a most perverse and dangerous nature? But it would be perfectly intelligible that such concessions should be made by degrees; and that the consummation of them, and especially that the admission to seats in the House of Commons, should have been purposely postponed till after the Union of the two parliaments.

"I protest, if I were to look upon the arrangement as permanent, I should doubt whether the seat in the House of Commons might not have been granted with less danger, than the right of voting for members, disjoined from the eligibility to serve. In the former case the conduct of the catholic member would have been influenced and controuled by his protestant constituents; but the irresponsible exercise of the elective franchise admits of no controul; and, powerful as the catholics are, and growing daily more and more powerful by the growing extent of their property, how is it to be supposed that the catholic constituents should not influence and controul the conduct of their protestant representative? It was natural to postpone the admission into parliament till the Union, lest there should be in time a preponderance of catholic members in the local parliament of Ireland; but as applied to the united parliament, I profess, I see no danger from the admission of catholic members from Ireland, which does not arise in an equal, or in a more eminent degree, from the power of returning members being vested in the catholic population.

"Look next to the situation of the Irish bar. In proportion as other walks of liberal profession are shut to the catholics, must the numbers of them be greater who will naturally flock into the profession of the law.

Comparing the amount of the catholics with that of the protestant population in Ireland, at no distant time a great proportion of the bar must be of the catholic persuasion. There is no reason on which to presume, that the talents of the catholic barristers will not be equal to those of their protestant competitors; and it is in the very nature of things, that so long as the catholic population are depressed below the level of their protestant fellow-subjects, they should feel towards each other with the spirit of a sect, and preferably throw their business into the hands of those of their own persuasions.—I have the highest opinion of the profession of the law; a profession which has produced so many eminent men, ornaments and supports of the state; and which is generally characterized as much by liberality as by talents. But it is no disparagement of that honourable and able profession to say, that great talents are won to the support of the state by honourable expectations, and by the prospects of just reward. And if the bar of Ireland are to be *illiberalized*, (if I may use that word to express my meaning,) and their views to be contracted and debased, by being confined merely to the acquisition of money, to the exclusion of any object of honourable distinction—would not the character of the bar be materially altered? And ought we not seriously to consider what might be the danger to the state from a body of such ability and influence, if an impassable limit and barrier were to be put to the hopes and exertions of a generous ambition?

"They who refer to the French revolution, and justly refer to it, as a lesson of dreadful warning, would do well to consider some of the leading principles, and predisposing causes, I will not say from which it arose, but by which the mass of the French people were prepared for it. None of these causes was more prominent, or more universally acknowledged by all thinking men, than the existence of those fanciful and artificial barriers, by which an insuperable line of separation was drawn between the higher ranks of the community, and those whose wealth, or talents and services, might raise them to acquired eminence. This line was drawn with precision, and observed with rigour; but it was drawn only in the manners and prejudices of society. Here you have established it by statute; and established it against a profession, whose daily studies are conversant with the constitution of states, and with the general principles of human society,—whose daily practice is of a nature to kindle and keep alive the spirit of aspiring ambition,—whose habits and qualities fit them to be leaders of the people.

"Look forward a few years to the period when the mass of the bar being catholic, and the mass of the business in their hands, a briefless protestant must nevertheless be selected to fill any vacancy on the bench. Every one knows what is the reciprocal influence of an enlightened bench and an enlightened bar; the mutual check and controul of authority on the one side, and of opinion on the other. Conceive a state of things in which t[he] check should cease to operate on o[ne] side, by the loss of that eminence which is the soul of all authority on the bench, conceive a catholic bar pleading to catholic juries, before judges who have been placed upon the bench, not for their wisdom, but for their faith, and imagine what consequences must follow!

"I do not say that this is now the case, I know it is otherwise; but I am tracing the inevitable operation, in times to come, of principles to which the concessions already made to the Roman catholics have given life and activity. I am contending against the

proposition, that the remaining disabilities can be maintained for ever. I am contending that the principles of the question are principles of expediency and of time; not fixed, not immutable, not eternal. I am contending that the condition of the catholics, after what has been done for them, must be necessarily progressive: unless indeed you are prepared to go back instead of forward. And I ask, Can you go back?

"All this may be very much to be lamented. It may be unlucky that we are brought into a situation in which we cannot stand still, and in which we can neither go on nor recede with safety. I am not of that opinion: but that opinion I am not now arguing; nor am I bound to argue it. I am only arguing that such is the state of things, however it may have become so; whether by negligence, or by impolicy, or by a just and provident design. A practical statesman will take things as he finds them; and will adapt his measures to what he finds, instead of lamenting over irretrievable errors, if errors they be, and wishing their consequences reversed and undone.

"Look next at your army. War is not now, as it has been in former times, an occasional and transitory evil. It must be considered, in the present state of Europe, as a permanent habit, as the very element in which this country must breathe and have its being. You have admitted catholic officers into your army; but you exclude them from the higher ranks of it. Your army swarms with catholic soldiers. To the Irish militia you do not scruple to entrust a part of the defence of Great Britain itself. Protestant generals, in other countries, have commanded catholic armies. Foreigners of whose religion we take little note, may command protestant British soldiers here. But no native catholic is to be permitted to hold a command over his fellow-subjects, of whatever religion they may be. Can this state of things, in such a state of the world, be permanent?

"I have heard, indeed, one answer to all these arguments, which, as I observed, was hailed with acclamation by some gentlemen opposite to me. It is this; that the great objects of ambition, whether civil, political, or military, from which the catholics are now excluded, could fall to the lot only of a few of the higher classes among them; and that it is mere pretence to suppose that the influence of their disappointment and discontent can affect the body of the people. O! profound ignorance of human nature! As if the objects of honourable ambition operated as incitements only to those who may have been proved by a calculation of chances to have a reasonable hope of attaining them! As if the aspiration after things too high to be within the reach of probable achievement, were not the surest pledge of excellence, even in the discharge of inferior duties! As if the single lord chancellorship, which it is so many thousand to one that any given individual does not reach, were not yet that which fills your bar, and throngs your inns of court with multitudes of men, capable of discharging its functions! As if the removal of this single prize, though you might show by irrefragable arithmetic that it did not in fact affect the prospects of one man out of ten thousand, would not yet be felt as touching and degrading the whole! As if, when some climbing spirit having nearly reached the topmost round of the ladder of ambition, was there met by a sentence of perpetual exclusion, the crowd of his fellow-citizens, who had watched and cheered his ascent, would not sympathize in his final ill success! As if they would not feel, however little pretension they

might have themselves to rise to a similar eminence and to experience similar disappointment, that it was somewhat hard upon their children, and their children's children, that they too should continue to bear about with them in their native land, a brand of natural inferiority, an inheritable and indelible stain like that of cast or of colour, not incapacitating them, indeed, for the toil of honourable exertion, but precluding them for ever from distinction and reward!

"But am I therefore prepared to concede every thing that is required, to concede it without delay, to concede it without condition or limitation? No such thing. The time when the brand of disqualification shall be removed; the period or the generation in which the stain of incapacity shall be considered as worn out or washed away, I am not now pretending to define. I do not say that this is the moment; but I do say that it is utterly inconceivable to me, that any man should talk of the present as a state of things which can endure for ever; that any man should think that we are now arrived at the point at which legislative wisdom can stop, and expect contented acquiescence; that any man should recommend a vote, which is to confirm this state of things, and to extinguish the hope of any future change, as the best mode of tranquillizing Ireland.

"But then the dangers of any fresh concession! the dangers of a catholic chancellor, or a catholic general, influenced by the pope, and the pope in the power of Buonaparte! What could we look for in such a case, but the subversion of the constitution, and the conquest of the kingdom?

"I confess I think that those who are appalled by these terrors, do give a rein to their imagination, rather than consult their sober judgment. I think too, that under the influence of an imaginary fear, they overlook nearer and more substantial dangers.

"There have been times, no doubt, when (as I have already had occasion to state) the tie of community of religion was stronger than that of a common country; when the geographer might have distinguished the divisions of the map of Europe by two colours, one denoting the catholic, and the other the reformed religion; and when the same distinction that described differences of faith would have implied at the same time, the respective policy, connections, and alliances of the several states of Europe. But thanks to Buonaparte for this incidental good arising from his various acts of usurpation and atrocity; he has exalted and called into action the feelings of patriotism, and taught them to supersede that fellowship which grew heretofore out of similarity of religious profession. The different nations of the civilized world may now, as heretofore, be characterized by only two descriptions—but these descriptions are no longer catholic or protestant, but French or not French.

"If leagues have been formed in other times of catholic powers, against the advancement of the protestant cause and interests, while states which had embraced the tenets of the reformed religion have combined on the other hand to reduce the pretensions of the ancient and corrupted ecclesiastical establishment, let us see how far the distinctions, founded upon religious differences, would apply to the existing state of the world. What is, in this respect, the conduct of Buonaparte, the sovereign of France, the successor of Charlemagne, the eldest son of the church? Is his a catholic league? Is it only with catholic sovereigns and catholic states that he forms his connections, or to them alone that he extends the benefit of what he calls his protection? Look, I say, at the

map of Europe: see Lutheran Saxony, knit to him in alliance; see Germany, whether reformed or catholic, portioned out at his will; see protestant Denmark waiting on his nod, and protestant Sweden shrinking at his frown; see Calvinistic Holland swallowed up into his empire; Calvinistic Prussia trembling at his footstool; and uncatholic Russia struggling in his toils! Yet there are those who seem to think, that the power of the pope is, after all, the formidable part of the great confederacy which Buonaparte has thus arrayed against us;—who, amidst a combination thus extensive, thus violent, and held together by principles with which religion (it might be thought) has very little to do, can see no real dangers, against which we have to guard, but in the debates respecting the concordat and the liberties of the Gallican church;—there are those who apprehend that, weary of ordinary warfare, Buonaparte is about to substitute the thunders of the Vatican, for those of the mere mortal artillery, by which he has shaken and subjugated continental Europe;—that after exhausting all terrestrial means of attack, he waits only for our consent to the catholic petition, to resort to a spiritual assault; to call in the aid of bulls and indulgences, and the other machinery of ecclesiastical hostilities;—

" Quicquid habent telorum armamentaria cœli!

" There is, however, one remarkable circumstance in the present state of Europe, which might suggest to the most timid and awe-stricken observer of superstitious indications, a doubt at least, whether the principle of religious antipathy be indeed so busy in the world at this moment as he imagines; whether this league of almost all the protestant states of Europe with France, be indeed directed to the express object of subverting the protestant religion in this country, and imposing upon us a catholic hierarchy, and a catholic sovereign. In one corner of Europe, and in one alone, there exists a spirit of resistance to France; and this—singularly enough, and as if for the express purpose of banishing all notion of religious difference from the quarrel—exists among nations the most bigoted to the Roman catholic faith of all the nations of Europe, namely, among the inhabitants of the peninsula. They are precisely the people who most steadily, sincerely, and bravely, have opposed themselves to Buonaparte's schemes of conquest and dominion; an opposition quite unintelligible, if this be really a religious war. What! shall it be in the kingdoms the most abjectly submitted to the papal authority,—in the strong-holds of the inquisition itself shall it be, that the standard of rebellion to the pope, acting (as we are taught to apprehend) through the instrumentality of Buonaparte, shall be raised, and raised with impunity?—And yet shall we be gravely told, that, in the name and authority of the pope, Buonaparte will wrest Ireland from Great Britain?—If the pope can conquer for Buonaparte, why does he not conquer the peninsula for him? Why is Spain yet upheld by protestant alliance, and Portugal yet sheltered by heretical arms? A breath of the church, a nod of the tiara, should surely dissipate this unnatural, this anti-catholic, combination.

" Fortunately, sir, in this instance we act more wisely than we reason. We do not distrust the disposition of the nations of the peninsula to oppose a stout resistance to the French power, because that power is predominant over the pope, who is in his turn undeniably predominant over the spiritual concerns of those nations. Not but we know very well that the times have been, when that circumstance

would have been of great importance and effect in the success of the war; but we know that those times are past—past for every country upon earth, it seems, except Ireland;—and, in the name of common sense, why not for Ireland too?

"Well and wisely have we done, in uniting ourselves to the cause of those gallant and oppressed nations; wisely for our own interest as well as for our glory. The page which records our efforts in the peninsular war will be among the brightest in our history. But strange indeed, and perplexing will be the duty of the historian, who shall have to blend with those annals of courage and renown, a faithful relation of the fears which prevent us from entertaining the petitions of the Irish catholics; who shall contrast the jealousy and suspicion with which we regard the population of catholic Ireland, with the fearlessness with which we pour forth that population in the just cause of catholic Spain.

"It would really seem as if the mighty perils with which we are surrounded, had confused our sense of the real nature of our danger. Our danger is from a mighty deluge which threatens to overwhelm us:—but we are crying 'Fire!' as two centuries ago. The convulsions of the earth have diverted into a new channel that stream which formed the line of demarcation between the different denominations of mankind:—but we stand hesitating on the brink of the ancient channel, which is left dry, and fancy it still impassable.

"But any farther concessions to the catholics of Ireland, it is contended, will lead to the overthrow of the established church, and therewith to that of the civil constitution. In this part of the argument, it must at least be admitted that the *onus probandi* lies with those who make the assertion. By what means, through what process, is this extensive mischief to be effected?—Surely those who have so clear an apprehension of the danger, can in some degree define the mode in which it is to be brought upon us.

"The bulk of the catholics are ignorant and unenlightened, says my right honourable and learned friend, and are under the influence of a priesthood, who are subservient to the pope.—Well: but the power of an unenlightened and ignorant multitude consists in physical force. How will that be increased by the admission of some of those who would naturally be looked up to by the multitude as their leaders, into the advantages of the civil constitution, into the offices of the state, into magistracies of the law, into seats in parliament, into commands in the army?—But the danger is said to be in these very admissions. Well: then, it must be a danger of a different sort—a danger not of force, but of reason—a danger that the catholic minister will win over his colleagues, that the catholic colonel will seduce his regiment, that the catholic member will persuade this House to countenance and bring about this fundamental change in the constitution. Is it in this way that the mischief is to be effected?

"My right honourable and learned friend professes not to enter into the particular doctrines of the Roman catholic church, nor even to impute, in these days, to persons of that persuasion, the wicked and pestilent tenets which our oath of abjuration disclaims. On what principle then are the fears of my right honourable and learned friend founded? for surely it was in reference to those tenets that the precautions against the admission of catholics into the state were framed.

"It is most true that the catholic religion, where predominant, is itself of an intolerant character; but although that be so, it does not follow

in theory, nor is it true in fact, that in states not catholic, that under protestant establishments—the catholics have been found intractable and turbulent subjects. But if such attempts should be made as my right honourable and learned friend apprehends, how are they to be met? By reason; and if that should prove insufficient, by force. It would be presumptuous in me to recal the attention of my right honourable and learned friend (skilled as he necessarily is in that branch of history far beyond any knowledge of it that it can have fallen to my lot to acquire) to the history of the primitive christian church, before it became civilly and politically established, before it attracted the protection, and mounted the throne of the Cæsars. Yet in looking at this question as a question of reason, it is not immaterial to observe, that the pretension to exercise, or to share the sovereign authority, is not one which the history of the Roman catholic church would authorise it to put forward as essential to its existence —Reason, to be sure, avails little against force; but here force and reason would be on the same side. And, should the catholics be wicked enough as well as mad enough to attempt the establishment of their religion as the religion of the state, the attempt must be met and defeated by the same means which would be used to suppress any other mode of rebellion. Let it not be forgotten, however, all this time, that the question is not whether we shall now begin to give to the catholics any rights, influence, and power; we have given them the means of acquiring a great moral force in society; and the question now is, whether we can annihilate the force that we have bestowed? and if not, whether we should not do wisely to reconcile them to the legitimate use of that force by assimilating it to the civil constitution?

"I confess, sir, that though I despise not any fears which good men and wise men, like my right honourable and learned friend, profess to feel, I cannot contemplate the church of England with all her piety and learning, with all her just influence, her honours and endowments, and yet apprehend that she wants strength to defend herself! This is not the time nor the place to enquire what are the real dangers to which the church of England is exposed; but I think that whatever they may be, they exist in very different causes, and in very different quarters, from those against which we are now so loudly called upon to guard. Not but if any danger be apprehended to the church of England, from whatever quarter, I for one,—and this House—and this country,—will be ready to come forward with the most strenuous exertions in her support; a support due to her from the love and veneration of all to whom she administers consolation and hope—due even from sectaries themselves, to a church which, nursed in persecution, herself learned mercy; a church which, purified and consecrated by the blood of martyrs, has learned to extend toleration to all conscientious dissent; a church riveted in the affections of so large a portion of the community, and inseparably allied with the state, which she sanctifies and guarantees! Such a church may surely bid defiance to any dangers with which the change of the civil state of the Roman catholics,—from what they now are to what they aim at being,—can possibly be supposed to threaten her.

"But I repeat, the *onus probandi* lies on those who affirm the church to be in danger.—One point, and (so far as I recollect,) one only, has been distinctly specified by my right honourable and learned friend. The catholics would seek to avoid the payment

of tithes to the established church, or even to obtain them for themselves. Now I venture to flatter myself, that I can set my right honourable and learned friend's mind somewhat more at ease upon this point. Presuming his alarm to be—not that the catholics will try to get tithes or any other species of property by force; (in that case, as I have said, force must be met by force; and that case might arise just as well to-morrow as after the repeal of all the remaining disabilities) presuming my right honourable and learned friend's alarm to be, that after admitting them into civil office, after taking off the bar and brand of religious incapacity, it will be difficult, in point of argument, to insist upon their continuing to pay tithes to the protestant clergy—if this be (as I imagine) the nature of my right honourable and learned friend's difficulty, I really flatter myself that I can in a great measure relieve him from it. I turn once more to that splendid instrument of catholic toleration to which I have before referred, the edict of Nantes; and close to the article which I before read, (admitting those of the reformed religion to all offices civil and political,) I find the following enactment with respect to the payment of tithes:

"Article XXV.

"We will and command, that all who profess the pretended reformed religion, and others who have adhered to their party; of what estate, quality, or condition soever, be held and constrained by all due and reasonable means, and under the penalties contained in the edicts already in force on this subject, to pay and discharge the usual tithes to the curates and other ecclesiastics, and to all such to whom they may properly belong, according to the usages and customs of the different provinces."

"I think the catholics will have no reason to complain, if the edict of Nantes be taken as the measure and mode of protestant concession to them; and my right honourable and learned friend sees that, after that model, he has nothing to fear for the tithes of the established church.

"Another point upon which my right honourable and learned friend has much insisted is, the want of the security to the crown, arising from the refusal of the catholics of the proposed *veto* on the nomination of their bishops. Certainly, it may be matter of consideration, whether this would not be a reasonable and proper security; and if so, whether it might not yet be obtained. In Russia, much more than a negative on the nomination of the catholic bishops, by agreement (as I believe) with the court of Rome, is exercised by the emperor, the nomination is actually made by him. The emperor appoints the bishop, and recommends him to the pope for consecration and ecclesiastical institution, which are never refused. I know not what could be the pretext for withholding the same thing, if thought necessary and desirable here.

"But I own it seems to me a great error to look at this question as if it were to be settled by a tedious and intricate negociation between parliament and the catholics, as between two hostile powers. That is, in my view, not the just notion of what ought to be an act of legislature. The executive government must necessarily arrange the details of the measure before it is recommended to the deliberation of parliament. It is, therefore, that I do not think it necessary or useful to enter here into any discussion, as to what might or might not be the proper securities under which any farther concession might be made. Such discussion could only tend to embarrass and render more difficult the task of

the executive government, just as the previous suggestion and examination of the terms of a treaty of peace in this House, would embarrass the subsequent arrangement of the articles of that treaty out of doors.

"I hardly know whether it be necessary to say a word upon the claim of right, as set up, or supposed to be set up, by some vehement and wrong-headed friends of the catholics, a claim utterly untenable, and one which, like the question of the repeal of the Union, hardly admits of being made matter of argument. It is not at this time of day to be made matter of dispute, whether there exists a paramount right and duty in the supreme power of a state to provide for its own conservation. The question is not whether it be competent to parliament to defend the constitution by excluding from political office any class or description of persons who could not be admitted without danger; the point in doubt is not whether parliament has the right to continue the disabilities, but whether or no, the causes in which they originated having ceased to operate, it might not be expedient to strengthen the constitution, by admitting four millions of men to a participation of its benefits, and to an interest in its security, rather than to continue an unnecessary guard against the shadows of past dangers. As to the mode and conditions of their admission, parliament is to judge. Let those conditions be as carefully contrived as the wisdom of man, as the jealousy of establishment can desire. Whatever they shall be, let parliament annex them to the boon, and then let those to whom the boon is offered, be left to accept or reject it, accompanied by these conditions.

"But I do not think that it is in a committee of this House, such as is proposed to-night, that such a measure can most beneficially originate. The catholics themselves do not appear to be of that opinion, for they have announced their intention of waiting till the expiration of the restrictions upon the Regent, and of then framing and carrying up a petition to the throne. In this they appear to me to act judiciously. It is by a recommendation from the throne that they have received nearly all the benefits that have been conferred on them during the course of his majesty's reign. In the delicate and complicated circumstances of a case involving so many interests and so many prejudices, and so much detail of consideration and arrangement, the executive government is alone adequate to prepare and introduce a measure calculated to answer the great object in view. A measure so prepared would be brought in the most convenient and expedient manner before this House; where it is obvious that questions requiring so much delicacy of management cannot be advantageously discussed in all their detail. The retraction of the offered *veto* is a sufficient proof of this proposition. The intention is avowed of petitioning the throne: how that petition may be received, no man is authorised to conjecture: yet there are not wanting grounds of hope to the catholics, that it may be received favourably; in such circumstances the warmest friend of the measure might have allowed time for making the experiment, and have refrained from bringing the matter before parliament, either to intercept the coming grace of the throne, or to anticipate a disappointment, which I know not what right we have to presume.

"No man can be ignorant of the prejudices existing in many classes of the community in this country against the concession of the catholic claims. I can entertain no doubt that these prejudices will be gradually overcome

by reflection and reasoning; because I have the strongest conviction that reason is on the side of the concession; and with time in this country reason always makes its way.

"But nothing could tend more effectually to soften these prejudices than to see the question in the hands of the executive government; and as it is one which, in the present state of the world, cannot be put altogether aside, I do most earnestly hope that those to whom the conduct of the executive government may be committed, be their individual bias what it may, will feel it a duty to look at this question in all its detail and in all its bearings, but to look at it in all its magnitude also, and forthwith to set about the digesting such a plan as may bring it into a practical shape for equitable and final consideration.

"The obstacle which existed to such a consideration on the part of the government, and which I am not ashamed to say I respected, and would have continued to respect, so long as it existed in full force, and which I think the catholics themselves ought to have respected, in gratitude for former benefits, in consideration of the age, the sufferings, and the virtues of the venerable and illustrious personage to whom I allude, and in deference to those conscientious scruples, which the catholics, claiming for themselves full liberty of conscience, are themore eminently bound to respect in others, —that obstacle, I say, being now unhappily no longer in the way, the government (in whatever hands it may be settled) has, in my opinion, no longer any ground or any execuse for leaving this great question loose, to be agitated at the suggestion of whoever may think fit to make a motion upon it. They ought to take it into their own hands. It is, if ever there was one, a question of vital interest to the safety of the empire.

"That this opportunity may be afforded to the executive government, I would say to the catholics, 'Do not press your claims at the present moment;' and with the same view, I should have most earnestly wished that my noble friend's motion had not been this night brought forward. I know how little I am courting popularity by these declarations. I make no professions of exclusive partiality. I wish well to the catholics, as a part of the population of the empire. I wish the question at rest, not in the way of victory, but of conciliation; not by a forcible constraint upon the honest prejudices of protestants, but by the removal of them; and to that removal I confidently look, if the subject be brought fairly before the country, and if the conduct of the catholics themselves be temperate, prudent, and conciliatory.

"I not only do not concur in, but I really do not understand the doctrine which my right honourable and learned friend laid down at the conclusion of his speech, that the admission of the catholics into the offices and situations from which they are now excluded, is absolutely forbidden by the constitution. How is this more true now, than it was true in the year 1793, that the constitution then forbade their admission into the privileges that were then conceded to them?

"The constitution of this country is not, so far as I have been taught to understand it, a code written out fairly in one book, and struck out at one heat like the revolutionary constitutions of modern France. The constitution, as established at our revolution, is what the constitution was, in principle, before that revolution, with such additional safeguards, and securities for the laws and liberties of the country, as the attacks which made that revolution necessary, and the dangers which followed it, suggested and

prescribed. Our revolution was not the erection of a new frame and theory of government, but the vindication and renovation of ancient laws; the assertion of ancient franchises; the confirmation of ancient and undoubted privileges and liberties; established long ago, and established, many of them (be it remembered,) by the wisdom and patriotism of our catholic ancestors.

"Nor is it at all more true, that many of the most disgraceful exclusions, and most goading and penal provisions against the catholics, were in fact the work of the revolution, or even contemporary with it. Reign after reign, from the revolution to the accession of his present majesty, teemed with more and more severe enactments for keeping down the catholics in Ireland. Of these enactments, many have been in the course of his majesty's beneficent reign repealed. How is it then, that what remains of them is fundamental to the constitution? Is it on account of the date of their enactment? Show that they are all of the date of the revolution. Or it is on account of the date at which their repeal is proposed?

"This then is an objection which applies universally to the whole catholic code, as it stood before the relaxation began, if it applies at all. And who is the man bold enough to say, that the catholic code, as it stood fifty years ago, was an essential and fundamental part of the British constitution?

"I cannot think, sir, that the British constitution is of this close, narrow, and exclusive character. Much rather would I describe it as of a capacity to admit and embrace all those who, born in the British islands, prove themselves sensible and worthy of its blessings; as inviting all the sons of the soil, whether of Great Britain or Ireland, into the shelter of its protecting arms:

"Pandentemque sinus, et tota veste vocantem
Cæruleum in gremium."

"This is the result to which I fondly look. Were the present motion calculated to hasten that result, it should have my hearty concurrence. But thinking it, for the reasons which I have stated, much rather calculated to defer any such result, by mixing the great question to which it in part refers, with circumstances of temporary and I hope transient irritation, I must give my vote against it."

The motion of Lord Donoughmore drew from the Marquis Wellesley the following reflections on this great question. He declared, "That he approached the interesting cause of the Roman catholics with a solicitude for its success which could not be surpassed, even by the ardour of the noble earl. From the first dawn of his reason to the present hour, his anxiety for the effectual relief of the Roman catholics of Ireland had been the warm sentiment of his heart, confirmed and animated by successive experience and reflection, and by the deliberate exercise of his judgment, not unaccustomed to the practical consideration of great affairs of state; he was born, bred, and educated in those principles of rational liberality, equally remote from intolerant bigotry, and from licentious disregard of established order. He had always supported every former proposal for the relief of the Roman catholics; if for a moment, in a period of peculiar and extraordinary embarrassment, he had suspended the active exertion of his opinions on this subject, the suspense had been to him most painful and irksome; it had been occasioned merely by a conviction, that more danger was to be ap-

prehended to the Roman catholics, and to the state, from a premature attempt to urge their just claim, than from a prudent delay of that claim, in submission to the character and circumstances of the times.

"It was necessary, however, to explain distinctly the foundations and limits of his opinions on the claim of the Roman catholics, because he apprehended, that he did not agree with any of the declared champions in this conflict.

"The heat of the contention had exaggerated and distorted the true and natural character of this question on both sides of the argument.

"On the part of the Roman catholics, the claim had been armed with all the violence and terror of indisputable right, spurning all accompanying condition, all previous consideration, all provident, amicable delay.

"The demand issued forth in the array of war, and no alternative appeared, but submission or battle.

"On the other side, every delay of a peremptory sentence of eternal exclusion was represented, as perilous to our civil, and nearly sacrilegious towards our religious establishments; all conditions were ridiculed, as nugatory or impossible; all previous consideration was deprecated, as an artful plot formed to inflame the expectations and demands of the catholics, and to damp the zeal of the defenders of our establishments in church and state.

"The restraint imposed by statute on the Roman catholics was asserted to be in itself a positive good; a venerable and sacred institution; it was consecrated as an essential article of our faith; not a safeguard to be respected and preserved, merely for the temporary security of the altar, but the very altar and ark of our religion.

"These excesses were violent and irrational. The argument must be disarrayed, and brought down from the pomp and ostentation of right on one side, and from the intemperate fury of bigotted passion on the other; and the path of discretion must be sought between the extremes of zeal.

"His noble friend (the Earl of Aberdeen) for whom, from grateful remembrance of revered friendship and of indelible affection, he entertained a sincere regard, and whose excellent speech would have delighted the kind heart of the illustrious statesman, (Mr Pitt, under whose tutelary care he had been educated) had most justly said, that the question upon the claim of the Roman catholics, was a mere question of state expediency.

"This was a correct view of that great and important question, and Lord Wellesley expressed his entire concurrence in that part of his noble friend's sentiments.

"Toleration is the intermediate point between persecution and encouragement. The precise limits of the principles of persecution, of toleration, and of encouragement, cannot, however, be accurately drawn by any abstract definition. These boundaries cannot otherwise be ascertained, than by reference to the relative situations of the parties, and to the circumstances of the times, and to the condition of the state.

"One maxim is clear and undeniable; that every state possesses a right to restrain whatever is dangerous to its security; no sect, no individual, can assert as a claim of right against the state, the relaxation of any restraint, of which the continuance is required for the safety of the community.

"On the other hand, every restraint, excluding any description of the subjects of any state from the enjoyment of advantages generally pos-

sessed by the community, is in itself a positive evil; an evil which can wisely or justly be endured, so long only as the probable danger to be apprehended from its removal, shall evidently exceed the certain mischief of its continuance.

"The restraint now existing upon the Roman catholics is, therefore, in itself a positive evil; an imperfection in the frame of the empire; the question is, whether this special and particular imperfection, which separates one great branch of the people from the common benefits of the general constitution, is a necessary evil, which must be sustained for the universal safety of the whole empire.

"No community can be warranted by justice or policy, in extending such restraints beyond the strict limits of necessity; if real danger requires this sacrifice of the impartial and parental spirit of any state towards all its subjects, that state, however reluctantly, must hold to such restraints, as the necessary means of public security.

"How does this reasoning apply to the claim of the Roman catholics of Ireland? What justification remains for continuing the restraint of which they complain? Is no mischief felt from its continuance? What danger is dreaded from its removal? What is the probable balance of peril between its continuance and its removal?

"The noble marquis declared, that in his judgment, the mischief of continuing this system of restraint greatly overbalanced any danger which could be apprehended from reverting to the more liberal, more mild, more benignant, and auspicious policy, which had adorned the earlier periods of his majesty's reign. The original severity of the penal laws was directed against the Roman catholics rather as the known instruments and abettors of the system of arbitrary power at that era, than as the sectaries of a peculiar religious faith. The papist succession to the British throne was dreaded, as the certain destruction of our liberties and laws, as well as of the independence and freedom of Europe; our ecclesiastical establishment was inseparably blended with the foundations of our limited monarchy, and of our civil rights; and a bulwark was formed by the admirable connection of the whole fabric of our constitution, which has proved impregnable to every assault of domestic or foreign foes. The long lapse of time, the gradual and progressive change of circumstances, have removed the alarm of a papist successor to the crown, or of a papist combination for the introduction of arbitrary power.

"The Roman catholics of Ireland have not been viewed by the legislature, as the ready instruments of ruin to our established constitution. Why have they been admitted to the benefits which they now enjoy? Why were they relieved from the ignominy of disherison? Admitted to the rights of property, to the elective franchise, to the bar, to the army, to various other advantages? Has the benevolence of the state rashly opened to them the portals of a constitution, of which they are believed to be the sworn foes? Have they been permitted to approach so closely to the throne and altar, under conviction of a traitorous conspiracy to destroy both?

"Their lordships must remember what has been already granted to the Roman catholics, before a just estimate can be formed of the effect, either of withholding or of conceding what remains under restraint.

"Do the Roman catholics of Ireland now possess no political power? No person acquainted with that country would deny that they possess a large, almost a predominant share of political power in Ireland.

"This fact afforded matter of deep reflection; it must be the policy of every wise state, to connect all descriptions of persons, possessing political powers, with the general frame of the community, to mix and blend their individual pursuits with the common interests of the state, and to attach them by the powerful ties of honourable ambition and honest gain to the established order of the government.

"A body, possessing great political power, but separated from the state by special exclusions and restraints; individual ambition extinguished; individual interest abridged; uninfluenced by the government; exercising an influence, which the government can neither extend nor diminish; dissociated from all the establishments, civil, military, and religious, but yet holding an intrinsic weight, which occasionally presses upon every establishment—what must be the operation of such a body upon the frame of any state? It must be prejudicial to public order and tranquillity, because its action is not coincident with the ordinary movement of the state, not regulated by the same principles, nor touched and moved by the same means, nor directed to the same ends.

"It would appear to be wisdom in any state to endeavour to associate such a body with the ordinary operations of the established government, by infusing the same principles of connection, which unite and harmonise all the parts of the community, and which form the peculiar strength and beauty of the British constitution. It was not so much a question whether additional political power should be given to the Roman catholics of Ireland, as whether they should now be refused those appendages to their present political power, which would identify its exercise with the interests of the state, and would constitute the bonds and pledges of attachment to the government, and the ties of union with the commonwealth. The action and force of our happy constitution depend upon a similar principle, which combines individual interests in the general preservation of order, and mixes and blends each part in the harmony of the whole. It is a wild theory to suppose, that the balance of the British constitution is maintained merely by the mutual check and collision of the great branches of political power, of which it is composed. The result of such a scheme must be either perpetual discord and disorder, or the total stagnation of the vital powers of the government, and the inaction and final decay of the whole system. But this conflict is prevented by the intervention of individual interests; without injuring the principles of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, which constitute the foundations of the government, the mildness of our laws, and the character of our nation, have tempered these apparently discordant materials into a system of the most regular and uniform action.

"The House of Lords is connected with the House of Commons, with the people, and with the crown, by many ties of common interest, mitigating the theoretical notion of aristocracy, which has been described as the sole constituent principle of this assembly. In the constitution of the House of Commons, the same temperature may be observed; and even the imperial crown of these realms is intimately blended with the interests of the nobility, of the gentry, and of the people. The great principles of the constitution are, in fact, to be traced in the frame of each branch of the legislature, as well as in the combination of the whole; and the happy intermixture of individual interests, the common right of the whole people to a participation in all the honours and

advantages of the state, are the vital energies, the soul and spirit of the British constitution. The present condition of the Roman catholics of Ireland is anomalous in this constitution, and repugnant to the policy of any wise state. The restraint which still exists, cements and embodies discontent, without impairing the force or activity of political power. Perhaps the restraint itself tends to increase the power of the body on which it acts, by concentrating its entire energy in a narrow space, and by precluding the interposition of any collateral interest or influence. The Roman catholics of Ireland are now bound together by these impolitic restraints, in a distinct community, naturally adverse to the establishment which excludes them. Remove this restraint, and you dissolve the ties of discontent; you disperse the sentiments of disaffection; and you introduce the powerful motives of individual interest, to counteract any combination against an establishment, which offers so many immediate advantages of emolument and honour. The danger to the protestant establishment in Ireland is now considerable, and must increase with the natural augmentation of the power and wealth of the Roman catholics, and with the necessary augmentation of their discontent, under the protracted continuance of this invidious system of exclusion.

"Their increasing property in land and commercial wealth, their increasing numbers in the army and at the bar, their increasing influence of every description, while they shall remain an alienated and distinct community, must be formidable to the establishment which perseveres in rejecting their solicitations for admission into its bosom.

"Their compacted strength must be directed against the protestant establishment, until a better policy shall incorporate the Roman catholic interests with the protestant power, by removing the odious obstacles which now preclude the Roman catholics from pursuing those objects of ambition and interest, which are open to other subjects of the crown.

"The noble marquis insisted that the removal of the restraints of which the Roman catholics of Ireland complained, could not be dangerous to the protestant establishment in Ireland. He asserted, that this liberal and salutary measure was indispensably necessary for the security of the protestant establishment in Ireland, which could never be safe while such a force of discontent was arrayed against it; that force would be disarmed most effectually, by abolishing the causes of dissatisfaction, and the barriers of exclusion.

"It has been suggested, that no hope could be entertained of appeasing the Roman catholics of Ireland; that their demands had increased with the concessions already made to them; and that their ambition, lust of power, of emolument, and dominion, were inordinate, boundless, and insatiable. What was the proof? They had been admitted to the right of property, and to the elective franchise, and they were so insatiate as to aspire to the capacity of representing in parliament the property which they possessed. They had been admitted to the bar, and they wished to serve the crown; to be of the king's counsel; to become judges and chancellors;—and these extravagant desires were deemed certain proofs of hostility against the state. Because they wished to serve the crown, they must intend to destroy it; they could not desire to reach the seals for any other purpose than to overthrow the throne. They were permitted to hold commissions in the army; they had served with valour

and glory; shed their blood in the cause of their king and country; beheld the inspiring example of their own native countrymen, leading British armies against the common enemy, and arresting the progress of France in the full career of her fury; and they were infected with the criminal ambition of desiring to emulate the illustrious sons of Ireland, under whom they had fought, and bled, and conquered; of hoping, ultimately, to direct the armies in which they had so gloriously served; and to devote to their country, in the command of her troops, those attainments, which they had laboriously acquired in the subaltern branches of her service.

"Were these unreasonable or inordinate desires? Was this criminal ambition?

"These wishes were the most substantial proofs that the Roman catholics entertained a true estimate of the value of the concessions which had already been made to them, and a just sense of the constitutional use of those advantages. Was it to be argued, that because the Roman catholics were sensible to the same emotions of honourable ambition and public glory, which similar causes, and similar situations, had raised in all other breasts, they must have conspired the usurpation of the government of their country. The legislature itself had excited these sentiments, which were the natural fruits of former concessions. Because the legislature had halted in its course, and had not pursued with steadiness the progressive policy of generosity to the catholics, in which it had advanced so far, was it just to reprove them for the necessary effect of a powerful cause, which they had not originated, and which they could not controul?

"Lord Wellesley, therefore, could not censure the solicitude of the Roman catholics to obtain those additional advantages, which naturally grew out of past concessions, and which were almost the necessary result of former gifts. From this disposition, he inferred no defect of gratitude or excess of expectation. The sentiment thus displayed by the Roman catholics was implanted in the human heart, and congenial to the spirit of every free constitution.

"The noble earl would thus perceive, that Lord Wellesley's opinions on the condition and claims of the catholics were substantially the same as his lordship's. He trusted that he should not be accused of a spirit of procrastination or delusion, if he now objected to enter into the committee for the purpose of instantaneously abolishing the restraints under which the Roman catholics of Ireland laboured.

"The claim of that body now appears under circumstances of peculiar disfavour; clad in the terrific armour of right, accompanied by a defiance of the legal authority of the state, by a premeditated outrage upon the law of the land, and by the most insulting and contumelious spirit of intemperate menace.

"To a claim of such an aspect, parliament cannot yield, even with justice to the claimants; it would prove a perilous gift to them, to concede any portion of the dignity and honour of parliament, which must be sacrificed, if, in the present moment, their lordships should submit to the temper and tone, in which these demands had been urged in Ireland, and to the violence with which they had been supported in open resistance to legitimate government.

"The trials of the offenders against the law were still in progress in Ireland; and the course of justice seemed to have suspended for a season, in that country, the active solicitations of those who had hitherto conducted

the affairs of the Roman catholics. Even they seemed to have determined, that the present moment was not suited to the discussion of this great question; and that time must be given for the return of tranquillity, before the voice of petition could again be heard in a tone duly adapted to the solemnity of the occasion.

"Why then did the noble earl now press their lordships to a decision? After all the rage and tumult of the contest in Ireland, the storm has paused, and an interval of repose and quiet has succeeded by common consent, as the necessary preparation of temper for the important deliberation which now approaches. Let not the noble earl prematurely interrupt this calm; on the other hand, let not their lordships suffer this vital question to remain dormant, until reviving impatience shall again awaken the tempest of passion. The claims of the Roman catholics of Ireland demand early consideration; in every view, for every interest, for every opinion, for every party, the early consideration of the question is indispensably necessary.

"That consideration Lord Wellesley would meet with every favourable inclination to the Roman catholic cause, but with a determination to tread the ground of concession with circumspection and caution; to examine the most favourable mode and time of removing the existing restraints; to provide the securities which might be requisite for the protection of our sacred establishments in church and state, and to consider every other beneficial arrangement which could tend to give additional happiness to Ireland, or additional strength to the empire in a settlement of such interest and importance.

"He would not advise the king, or the prince, to bow the protestant sceptre of the realm to any fictitious pretensions of right, however arrayed with violence, or enforced by clamour; nor would he lend his hand to close the gates of the constitution against any class of his majesty's faithful subjects; nor would he presume to proclaim a sentence of irrevocable exclusion against a large portion of the population of the empire, under colour of pure zeal for the protestant establishment. In real affection and veneration for that establishment, he yielded to none of those whose zeal had been so conspicuous. The protestant establishment in church and state was, indeed, the great security of all our public happiness and welfare. Whatever protection of persons or property was enjoyed by any class of subjects, by any sect of religion, whatever civil or religious liberty existed among us, originated from the protestant establishment, was guarded and preserved by it, would flourish with its prosperity, and decline with its decay All sects, all parties, civil and religious, are concerned in the preservation of this great bulwark of the community. It is the safeguard of the subject, as well as of the crown; connecting the purity and moderation of our reformed church with the regulated freedom of the people, and with the temperate spirit of our limited monarchy. To this refuge all have resorted, in the dreadful visitations of confusion, by which the order and liberty of this country have been so often disturbed; and under this hallowed altar all sects have found shelter from despotism or licentiousness:

"Huc tandem concede—Hæc Ara tuebitur Omnes,
Aut moriere simul."—

"If it could be credited that the Roman catholics of Ireland had conceived the frantic imagination of subverting the fair fabric of the protestant constitution of the realm, and of erecting a papist state, (of whatever

form) on the ruins of our laws, liberties, and religion, this argument would assume a very different aspect; the point at issue would then be, not what their lordships should concede, but to what extremity the indignant power of the government should be urged against a conspiracy of such unexampled atrocity. But even the imprudent management of the Roman catholic cause in Ireland, (however reprehensible) discloses a spirit utterly incompatible with such a suspicion. It is evident that the ambition, the desire of gain, the restless solicitations of the Roman catholics, are all directed to advancement under the protestant constitution. They are jealous not of our establishment, but of their exclusion from its benefits; they desire not to destroy it, but to enjoy its advantages; they are aware that its destruction would expose them to evils of far greater magnitude than those which they now endure. But they behold many benefits abundantly showered upon others, and forbidden to them; and they complain not of the existence, but of the partiality of our happy constitution. If this view of the temper of the Roman catholics was erroneous, Lord Wellesley admitted that much of his reasoning was incorrect.

"But if he had truly described the sentiments of the great body of the Roman catholics of Ireland, fairly stated their interests, and justly urged their claims, let them come forth and vindicate themselves against their own leaders, who had tainted the purity of this great cause with faction, turbulence, and disorder.

"An interval might now be expected of comparative tranquillity; let the Roman catholics of Ireland employ that interval, not in devising new means of violating or evading the laws, or of insulting and vexing the legal government; not in fortifying their claims with new armaments of right, or menaces of force; but in composing and allaying the ferment so unpropitious to the favourable settlement of this question.

"Instead of accumulating causes of irritation, let them endeavour to mitigate prejudices and jealousies which have been exasperated by the recent indiscretion of their own management. Let them manifest a sincere desire to furnish to their protestant brethren every reasonable pledge of attachment to the established constitution, and every practicable security for its stability and prosperity. In soliciting the favour of the law, let them display a spirit of obedience to the law, and a disposition to submit with reverence to legal authority.

"May these admonitions be received in the conciliatory spirit in which they are uttered; and may a returning sense of duty and affection avert the perils of civil discord, restore the disturbed temper of the nation, and enable parliament to consider without passion, and to decide with dignity a question vital to the safety and peace, to the honour and glory of the empire."

The Earl of Liverpool, on a subsequent occasion, and in answer to an able speech of the Marquis Wellesley's on this important subject, spoke as follows:—"My lords, my noble friend has commenced his speech by calling on your lordships, whatever may be the ultimate decision of this question, to go into a committee upon the subject. My view of the subject is so different from that of my noble friend, in every point, that I have no difficulty in saying, that upon every view which I could take of the question, the motion of the noble lord must have my decided negative.

"My lords, I certainly do not wish or desire any person who may be of opinion that out of such a committee,

benefit would arise, to withhold any wish of theirs upon that subject. But, my lords, I do state, as my own confident opinion, that from a motion such as this, under all the circumstances of the case, in the present state of the country, and in the present temper of the catholics, no benefit whatever is likely to arise; but on the contrary, and it is in that view that I oppose this question, taking into consideration the temper and disposition of the parties, the adoption of this motion would be only calculated to alarm the established church, and ultimately to disappoint the catholics; and therefore I shall agree in the proposition for giving it a decided negative.

"My noble friend has gone into a long and laborious detail upon this subject; but I confess that if his argument were just, if his view of the question were right, I would think he had less reason for voting to go into a committee than almost any person, because, if the danger of refusing these concessions were as great as he represents, and the danger of granting them so little, the true mode would be to resolve at once on a measure for repealing of these tests and disabilities, and to put an end to all deliberation upon the subject.

"The view which my noble friend had taken of this subject is certainly a very extended one, and, my lords, I will endeavour to follow him through the different grounds which he has taken; and if I misrepresent any opinion of his, he will do me the justice to believe that I have not done it wilfully. I am extremely anxious that any point which is at issue between us should be ascertained with care; but on any point where no difference does exist, I shall be willing to avow my concurrence with my noble friend.

"My lords, without going at present into that part of the subject which was treated in the commencement of his speech—without entering into any enquiry how far religious establishments are, or are not, *necessary* to a state—I believe we shall all agree that religious establishments do form an important part of the government and interest of every civilized country. My lords, I do subscribe to the principle which the noble lord, both on the present and upon various other occasions, has laid down as the foundation of his reasoning upon this subject, namely, that every restraint, civil, political, or religious, is to be considered as an evil in itself, and can be justified only by necessity. We, therefore, have only to strike the balance of advantages betwixt the continuance and removal of a system of restraint and exclusion, and this brings the question immediately to its fair and natural issue.—But there is another principle connected with this to which the noble lord has alluded, but upon which he will give me leave to say he has fallen into some mistake. I admit that an indirect exclusion may be as severe under certain circumstances as a direct exclusion; but I think it is material, with a view of unravelling the argument, that it should be understood that it is not upon any principle of direct expulsion that the catholics are excluded, but by the indirect operation of tests. And the question for your lordships now to determine is, whether these tests are not indispensable to the security of your establishment in church and state; and whether they do or do not bear with great severity upon particular classes of his majesty's subjects? Upon this question it may be necessary to descend to some particulars.

"Undoubtedly, the first consideration that presents itself to our minds is, the difference between the tests in different parts of the empire. In Eng-

land we have tests in corporations, and tests taken by persons holding offices, civil or military, according to act of parliament; and certainly as to any difference that may exist between the tests imposed upon the catholics in England and those of Ireland, I have no difficulty in declaring my readiness, under circumstances, to give my vote for removing that distinction, whatever it may be. But in Ireland, whatever may be the merits of those tests which affect that country, the whole question of civil disabilities stands upon a footing entirely different from what it does in England. In Ireland you have no test and corporation acts, as such,—you have no law in force which obliges dissenters, generally, to conform in the way that the church of England obliges the people of this country to conform to its views and policy. In Ireland your tests apply to the catholics exclusively. They apply to their doctrines only, and they do not bear upon all other dissenters within that part of the united kingdom. I admit, therefore, that in Ireland, the question stands upon a different foundation from what it does in England; and I am prepared to say, and I wish it may be distinctly understood, that if the differences between the catholic and established churches were differences merely religious, if they were confined to doctrines purely of a religious nature, such as transubstantiation,—the invocation of saints,—the adoration of the Virgin Mary,—if they were confined to doctrines of that description, I should say that there was no reason for putting the Roman catholics upon a worse footing than any other class of dissenters in the British empire; but that is not the main difference between us. The point which we are to consider, is, that there are tests applied to opinions that do not relate to points purely religious, that do relate to points connected with the civil and religious government of the state, and which we contend are necessary for the security of the country; but which the Roman catholics cannot get over. Your lordships will see, that if we look at the oath of supremacy, that is one of the tests to which they make objection, but of which, it appears to me, they have taken a false and erroneous view; because your lordships are aware that that oath does not call upon a person to say that the king is the head of the church. It is an oath simply of abjuration—it is an oath that only calls upon a person to say, that no foreign prince, or foreign potentate, hath, or ought to have, any power or pre-eminence, or supremacy in these kingdoms. If there could be found any person who never heard of the differences between protestant and papist, and to whom it was stated that there was a power in Europe which claimed a general jurisdiction in all countries; that there were certain countries that denied that jurisdiction; and the question were put to him as to the reasonableness or expediency of that independent country so denying that supremacy, and putting a test to all persons who wished to possess civil situations, and who claimed civil power—I think that were such a proposition put to a person ignorant of the dispute between catholics and protestants, his answer would be, that such a measure was so reasonable, so just, and carried along with it the principle of an independent government and country, that no person in the state ought to refuse to take the test; or if he did refuse, he ought not to complain of exclusion. This is the true principle of a protestant state, feeling that it is independent, that it has full power within itself, and that no power out of it has any authority to interfere in its state policy.

"It does therefore appear to me,

that those who claim a right to exercise power in it, should acknowledge the supremacy of its power, and should take an oath to bind them thereto. But then we hear it now stated in argument, that the Roman catholics are ready to disclaim all civil and temporal power in any foreign potentate or authority, and that they only wish a spiritual authority in the pope to be recognized. Now the question is, how far it is possible to separate spiritual from temporal power? I am not disposed to discuss in the abstract, how far it may be possible to separate them; but of this I am certain, that it is impossible to separate spiritual and temporal power in any country, in which the larger part of the population are Roman catholics. This I state as founded upon the system of that church itself, and I never heard, and I should be glad to hear, something like an answer to this argument. It has been stated, that the spiritual power alone of the pope, according to the Roman catholic notion of it, is supreme. But then, is it not evident, that this power applies to the most sacred of institutions, upon which, in fact, depends the whole form of civil society; that it applies to the institution of marriage, which is the foundation of society, whether it be of the Christian, Mahometan, or any other religion whatever; and forms the basis of all the charities of life, and is an institution upon which depend nine out of ten of all the questions affecting property. And yet every one knows that the law of the Roman catholic religion upon this subject, is different from the protestant. The Roman catholic thinks that it is a question not fit for the decision of temporal courts, while the protestant thinks it is. The former does not apply to the ordinary tribunals of the country for jurisdiction in this question, conceiving that the spiritual court alone has controul in matters of this nature, and that in the dernier resort, appeal lies only to the court of Rome itself.

"Now with respect to the charges exhibited against the Roman catholics, in a moral point of view, I cannot believe them. I do not believe they hold the doctrine of not keeping faith with heretics; and I verily believe as far as regards any moral principle, not connected with the established church, their institutions are as pure as our own. All I say is, that with regard to their ecclesiastical opinions, they are different from those of his majesty's protestant subjects; and when I apply this principle, I would ask, can it be safe, in a protestant country, to place upon your bench of justice, judges to decide upon the state of property, who hold the law of the country to be directly at variance with that of their own religion, who believe that your law is adverse to the law of God?

"Now, my lords, let us follow out this principle—The Roman catholic is not an elective church. It is an hierarchy. It has the same gradation of rank with the established church. It has also the same principle of ambition and desire for temporal power as the established church. But in whom is that mass of patronage to be placed to which such an institution would naturally give rise?—Why, in the pope himself;—a foreign power—a foreign potentate. Why then, the question is, whether a jurisdiction of the kind in all the appointments, in all the ecclesiastical gradations of the catholic hierarchy,—a power which has the same influence in the jurisdiction of the Roman catholic church, as the king of England has over the protestant, may not be made a formidable instrument in such hands?

And may it not be a fair subject of jealousy in a protestant country? Then, my lords, apply this to other principles; apply it even to what may appear purely spiritual; namely, to excommunication and all its consequences. Are noble lords aware of the consequences of excommunication to individuals who incur the penalty of that sentence? They may see in their courts of law, one trial which has lately taken place, where the most important temporal effects have arisen out of offences, which, in a fair sense of the word, were of a mere spiritual nature, and which became subject to that punishment. It gives the power of personal confinement, and corporal punishment, to the persons exercising it; and no man will say this is not a temporal power! I will next call your lordships' attention to the important powers of absolution and auricular confession:—I do not direct your lordships' attention to that power as it is understood in its spiritual effects—but to the temporal power with which it invests the priesthood of Ireland; and it gives more temporal power and authority to those persons amongst the populace than can be claimed by the state.—My noble friend has alluded to the doctrine respecting the pope at this day. He believes that the tenets of the catholic religion are different from what they were formerly. I believe the statement of my noble friend was not made without foundation; but, I think, it goes to this effect, that you are the more seriously called upon, before you make these concessions, to know what is the state of these opinions, and whether any, and what securities can be obtained from the Roman catholics? But I have stated generally what are my sentiments upon this subject; and in putting an interpretation upon the principles of the Roman catholics, I do not wish to refer you to opinions of a remote period, or to ancient authorities; but the authority to which I wish to refer you, is the Roman catholic authority of an Irishman and a priest at the present day; a person of most respectable character, of great learning. In a synod of February 1810, the doctrine to which I will now allude, was recognized, and published through the pamphlet of that learned man. He states that there is a great deal of flesh and blood in this spiritual power; that the bishops claim the power of imprisoning in episcopal matters, of whipping and other tortures, of settling the fees of the inferior clergy on baptism, &c. And will any man say that these are not powers of a temporal nature?

"These, my lords, are not the opinions of any prejudiced protestant, nor the opinions of an authority of any remote time, but they are the opinions of a man learned in the knowledge of the subject, a pastor of the Roman catholic religion, and now in existence; and if the opinions of the catholics of former times were different from what they are now, these are, however, the sentiments and opinions of persons most anxious for the furtherance of this great object. But until the opinions of catholics are further explained by themselves, as we are to judge of this question with reference to present times and sentiments, we must act upon the information we have.

"I now wish to know what is the effect of these doctrines, and the difficulties, and, I may say, almost the impossibilities of drawing any distinction between spiritual and temporal power. I wish noble lords, who support the motion, to say how a conscientious Roman catholic can act with respect to those disputed points of authority? In a thousand questions of daily occurrence,

the Roman catholic may be placed in a situation where there are two conflicting authorities. Is it not natural, therefore, for him to prefer the higher duties to the lesser? May not a Roman catholic who considers himself thus in allegiance to two authorities, in a matter of doubt, consider his spiritual duties first, and his temporal duties afterwards? Therefore, my lords, I cannot see that there is any possible principle by which you can act with safety to yourselves, if you make the proposed concessions.

"As long as this country is a protestant country—as long as you maintain its government by protestant laws, I do profess that I am at a loss to see how it could be safe, to put persons who entertain such opinions as these, into the possession of places or power of any considerable importance.

"My noble friend says, that the danger now is not so great, when compared with the circumstances of the present day, as it was formerly. I certainly am disposed to admit that these opinions might, according to different times and circumstances, be more or less dangerous; but if ever there was a time, in the history of the world, when they were more dangerous than ever, now is that time. Formerly, when the question discussed was between protestant and papist, catholic Europe was divided. There was a balance of power between the different states of Europe; and the very circumstances arising out of that balance made the pope an independent power; but now, circumstances are quite different, because all the continental nations are under the influence of France. My noble friend has alluded to the present situation of the pope, and has stated that his holiness, acting upon the dictates of his own conscience, rather than forego the maintenance of his opinions, has submitted to the degradation of becoming a prisoner under French authority. Now, if that pope should, in the course of nature, be taken off, we have no security for his successor. Who has the power of deciding as to his being canonically elected? Do we not recollect the circumstances of the times?—Do we not know that the greater part, I may say the whole of catholic Europe, is under the dominion of France? Do we not know that Rome is at this moment considered the second town in the French empire? Under these circumstances, then, who is to decide what dangers may not arise, and what new and dangerous increase of power may not be added to the papal authority? Therefore, my lords, I cannot see any circumstances which make the danger less now than it ever was. Nay, I will fairly state, that upon every view I could take of this subject, the result, in my mind, has been this,—that the danger of granting the concessions at this moment is, upon the whole, greater than that of withholding them.

"I think it my duty here to consider what the danger of concession is, as far as it respects the security of the government. My noble friend does not see how this is to form a part of the question. Now, the question which we ask of those who conceive that the catholic claims should be conceded, is, if they were now granted, would there be a complete barrier against all further demands? What security, I would ask, have we, if we granted all they now require, that they would stop here?" I would beg to say one or two words upon this subject, and refer your lordships to the conduct of the catholics, at a former period. In the year 1792 the elective franchise was demanded upon very different conditions from those on which it was held by the protestants. It was not at all demanded upon equal terms with them; but in the

year 1793 that privilege was conceded upon the same terms as the protestants enjoy it, in virtue of the reasons then assigned. How long did those concessions keep the catholics contented? I do not mean to cast any injurious reflections upon them; but your lordships are aware that in the year 1795 they applied again to parliament for the purpose of removing all their religious disabilities. I have already stated that I completely acquit the Roman catholics of all those immoral tenets that have been laid to their charge; which I believe most sincerely have no foundation in fact; but we cannot forget that they consider that theirs is the only legitimate church in the world; we cannot forget that they are adverse to our ideas upon this subject, not by doctrine only, but they consider that their church has an universal jurisdiction, not in one particular country, but in all countries; and that this forms an essential and vital part of the Roman catholic religion. Now, is it in the course of human nature, that were you to make these concessions of political power, they would rest satisfied, or that they would not look forward to the furtherance of their own religion, and the establishment of that religion in these countries? What temptation, my noble friend asks, have they, more than any other men, to injure the present establishment? When you come to the question, you will find what motives they would have; you would find a very powerful interest created prejudicial to the protestant establishment. With regard to the present question, however, and I wish not to be misunderstood, my sincere opinion is, that the immediate effect of this measure would be merely to benefit a small proportion of your Roman catholic subjects directly and immediately; but at last it would begin to be considered by them, with respect to their church establishment, whether they shall pay for the maintenance of two churches or one? Your lordships will see the consequence of that. The question would be then, whether they shall pay their own clergy instead of the protestant clergy? And, I would ask, is there a man in Ireland of any rank or description who is not directly and intimately interested in that question? By the measure now proposed there is no doubt you will directly benefit a few; but the instant you would adopt such a measure as this, you would have all ranks and sects of the people laying claim to that privilege to which I have alluded.

"My lords, in considering the interests of the parties who would be affected by this measure, you would not lose sight of the interests of those whose very circumstances from the nature of their situations, would, above all others, be most affected by the measure—the great body of the clergy of Ireland—who would feel a direct and immediate interest in the question; whereas the Roman catholics have only an indirect interest in it. But my noble friend, I really think, was a little misled in this part of his argument, and departed not a little from his premises; for in the beginning of his speech, he said he was a friend to the protestant establishment in Ireland; whereas, in fact, the whole of his arguments went to this—that there would be no safety for that establishment until the Roman catholic clergy were established in Ireland: and I do maintain, from the opinion of the noble baron opposite, that the inference from all the arguments and views that have been urged on that side of the House goes to this—that Ireland should be made a Roman catholic country, and that the establishment of Ireland should be Roman catholic.

"It has been suggested that it would be right to divide the whole of the temporal emoluments of the church of Ireland between the catholic and protestant clergy. I shall expect then, when the subject is more matured, to hear that the Irish protestant bishops, having first generously made over a portion of their endowments, for the peace and maintenance of their catholic brethren, are ready to make a further proposition, as in some of the German states, to subject all his majesty's dominions, by law, to a division of the produce of ecclesiastical dues between the two churches. That this is an opinion even now entertained it is not irrational to suppose; but that it is one of the consequences that will follow the concession of the catholic claims, I most sincerely believe.

"My lords, we are not without authorities upon this part of the subject in foreign countries; and I should be glad to know where you would find a check on that spirit to which the conflict of these different interests must necessarily lead? I believe I may safely say that there is no free state in Europe, in which it has been found practicable for catholics and protestants, for any long continuance, to administer government under the same system together.

"In Switzerland we find it was not the case, nor in Holland; and in Poland the attempt was made, but it terminated in the exclusive domination of the catholic religion. My noble friend says, take away the interest that is hostile to the establishment, and you are secure. For my own part, I believe that if in Ireland you could establish the Roman catholic religion, you could not also preserve a protestant king; because the Roman catholic clergy would look up to the crown for their temporalities, and the laws of the church must be Roman catholic instead of those of the religious establishment of this country. But the question is this—whether in a protestant country, whilst it remains protestant, you can introduce a Roman catholic power without an insurrection, or at least the most hostile prejudices against it? I say it is inconsistent with the principles of government, and at variance with every example of history.

"What do the Roman catholics say themselves? I do not wish to go now into the question of the *veto*. The Roman catholics profess exclusive submission to a foreign catholic church, and then they call upon you to admit them to all the benefits of your protestant establishment. This goes most materially and most essentially to the important view under which this question is presented to you. My lords, if I am to consider the effect that this measure may have upon the constitution of this state: If I am to consider of the effect it may have upon the political and civil establishment of Ireland, I do believe whatever convenience may arise, from acceding to these claims, the mischief would be infinitely greater than the danger of refusing them at once.

"When I speak of the opinions of the Roman catholics, as they maintain them at present, I do not shut out the hope that some serious and essential changes may take place. If they do, the question may come, under new circumstances, before parliament. Then will be the proper time to entertain the consideration of the question. But until we have these changes, or until we have sufficient security against that foreign power of which I have spoken, I do consider it to be utterly inconsistent with the principles of our constitution to admit the catholics.

"My noble friend concluded his speech with a reference to the constitution as established at the Revolution;

but I will not go into the consideration of that question. My noble friend seems, however, very much to undervalue the security which the intimate connection between the protestant establishment and the government gives to the constitution. My own view of the Revolution of 1688 is this—that the church establishment of the country, as it now exists, having always been an object of affection to the government, the Revolution was as much founded upon the principle that the state should be protestant as that the monarchy should be limited. The object sought by that great event was the maintenance of our religious, civil, and political liberties together.

"In viewing this question, let me entreat noble lords to consider upon what principle you can justify the limitation of the crown to a protestant succession, if this question, as of right, can be admitted? You have done away all restrictions upon the catholics short of political power, and now it is desired to surrender that. If this is a question of expediency I can understand it; but if it is argued as a question of right, you have no alternative, and you can do nothing else. That they will not stop at the point that we may think expedient is pretty evident—the prayer of this petition is for every thing. You are not desired to consider their case with a view to give them any particular privilege, or a part of what they ask; but you are called upon not only to give every thing, but to consider their demand upon the ground of right. My lords, it is an essential principle of your protestant constitution, that your king be a protestant; yet I ask upon what principle of justice it is you can exclude the catholics from having a catholic prince in possession of the crown? If you surrender what they now claim, then I would ask you, would you put a Roman catholic family on the throne? and if you would not, how could you exclude the Roman catholics, if it be their right, from the benefit of having a catholic monarch? I do therefore maintain, that the very essence and principle of the Revolution was that you should have a limited monarchy; and that the state should be protestant. I am thoroughly satisfied that in the present state of things, no benefit can arise from the discussion of this subject. You are called upon to make, not a particular concession, but to concede the whole; and upon grounds, as I think, inconsistent with the general security of the establishment of your country; and therefore I give my opposition to this motion."

Having thus submitted ample specimens of the sentiments and reasonings of the leading men in both houses of parliament on each side of this great question, the chapter shall be concluded by a few general reflections.

Every man who is capable of taking a dispassionate view of this subject, must be aware, that in the heat of controversy many very silly arguments have been urged on both sides, from which it were well if the subject could be disencumbered. It would be too much to say, that even the discussions of the legislature have been untainted with this species of folly, generated in the violence of debate, and the desire of victory; while the proceedings of the catholics themselves have been wholly stained and debased by the most despicable extravagances. It might have been supposed, for instance, that a general assent would have been given to some leading propositions, not less obvious to common sense than to the most refined philosophy; viz. That the end of all free governments is the general benefit of society; that the greatest benefit is produced by the equal par-

ticipation of all classes of the people in the rights and privileges of the constitution; and that under such a government, therefore, all the subjects are entitled to the same privileges, unless some weighty reasons can be urged to justify an exception. The right of the people may not be what is called an absolute right, that is, it cannot be vindicated by force, since no abstract reasoning can for a moment imply an appeal to force against the supreme power of the state. But all classes of the people have a fair and unquestionable claim, in justice and policy, to an equal participation, not of *some* but of *all* the privileges which are enjoyed by their fellow subjects,—a claim which cannot be lawfully resisted, unless some strong case of necessity is made out to justify the exclusion. The necessity which creates also limits the right exercised by the supreme power; and any disability imposed, any abatement of privilege—without a cogent reason to justify it,—is an act of mere tyranny. It is not the business of him who is excluded or oppressed to shew that he may be safely admitted to the enjoyment of his rights; he pleads the great and general law which sustains the very being of society, and requires not arguments to make it out; his case is established if his adversary, on whom the whole burden of the proof lies, cannot justify the exception.—These reflections expose the folly of the distinction which is so ignorantly taken by some persons—a distinction betwixt toleration and power—a distinction which falsely assumes, that if persons whose religious sentiments differ from those of the established church are merely tolerated, they have no right to complain, and that their exclusion from power requires no justification. The catholic or the dissenter have an irresistible answer to such puerilities; they are entitled to say that what is called *power* is their birth-right, as well as that of their fellow-citizens, and unless it can be proved that there is a clear advantage to the state, in giving a monopoly of powers to certain classes, and that there would be danger in admitting others to an equal participation, no benefit can be derived from the distinction. The extent to which the measures of exclusion ought to be carried, is a question, not of principle but of degree: and the catholic or dissenter is still injured, if he be deprived but of one insignificant privilege, to which his fellow subjects are entitled. He who owes a debt, does not discharge it by paying one half, nor by paying up to the last shilling, if that shilling be still withheld; the catholic is the creditor of the state for his natural privileges; and unless he has done something to forfeit them, no part can be refused him. Those who resist catholic emancipation on such grounds, are the worst enemies of that cause which they are so forward to espouse.

Lord Wellesley declared, "that the claim of the catholics is not a claim of right; that the question before the legislature was a question of mere political expediency." He must by this have meant to express his disapprobation of the doctrines propagated by some insane persons, who described the catholic claims as claims of *abstract right*, which under any circumstances must be conceded. There is not—there cannot be, any such thing as abstract right—the adage *fiat justitia ruat cælum*, as applied to politics, is a brilliant absurdity; all that the most virtuous and enlightened mind will require on a great question of policy, is, that no base motives should interfere with the distribution of national justice, not that, from a veneration for empty sounds, the being or happiness of society should be hazarded. In this limited and intelligible sense, the claims of the ca-

tholics are as much claims of right as any other pretensions submitted to the cognizance of legislative wisdom. This concession, however, alters not the basis on which these claims must for ever rest. Those rights which are recognized,—that justice which is reverenced solely because it is necessary to the support of the social order, can never demand that any thing should be done which may bring into peril the repose, nay, the very existence, of that frame of society which our duty and our interests alike call upon us to support. The catholic can gain no advantage, therefore, by stating his claim as a matter of right; his enemies may concede so much without fear or hesitation, but he himself, if he really wish to succeed, should direct all his efforts towards convincing his fellow-subjects, that he may be *safely* admitted into the bosom of the constitution. It is a singular circumstance, that in the beginning of the 19th century, the statesmen of the most enlightened nation of Europe should be chiefly occupied in adjusting the pretensions of religious sects; and it is no less curious, that scholastic questions should find their way into a great controversy of practical politics.

It can never be an essential part of the constitution to exclude a large proportion of the subjects from the power and honours which are accessible to others. Those who maintain a different opinion, offer an insult to that constitution, of which it is probable they understand but little; they affirm, that under any circumstances, how favourable soever to the most generous and liberal principles, the British constitution prescribes the degradation of a portion of the people. Yet this venerable pile was constructed, we are told, for the security and protection, the comfort and happiness of the whole people; it was reared, indeed, in an age when a spirit of turbulence made it necessary to surround it with many defences, which were neither essential to its integrity, nor propitious to its elegance; but when better days shall arrive—when its defenders shall become so powerful, and its enemies so weak, that it might safely be stripped of these cumbrous appendages, how stupid must that veneration for ancient deformity be, which with religious care would still retain so much of what would be at once useless and inelegant? If the British constitution were, indeed, such as it has been represented; if it were constructed on the principles of eternal exclusion and endless tyranny; if it perpetuated alarm when the danger had subsided, and immortalised animosities, which time might already have extinguished, every wise and good man would pray as devoutly for its speedy apotheosis, as he now with a fervour, not less than that of Roman patriotism, will exclaim, *Esto perpetua!*

It is quite absurd to pretend, in defence of their exclusion from political power, that the great body of the catholics suffer no injury; that the whole clamour originates in the ambition of a few individuals, and that the people have no interest in the dispute. Even if it were true that only the higher orders of the catholics suffer from the existing disabilities, and if it were also true that they suffer without reason, the danger of refusing to accede to their just claims might be less imminent; but the moral obligation to grant relief would not be less binding. The most galling tyranny to its victims, is that which selects but a small number for vengeance, and leaves them without even the consolation which is derived from a community of suffering. But is it true that the higher orders—the candidates for the great honours of the state, are alone

affected by the disabilities? is it true that in this free country the distribution of honours is confined to certain privileged orders, and that genius humbly born dares not look forward to its due reward? No man will presume to say this; so that although the remaining disabilities which attach to the catholics may affect but a small number, even of their nobles, in the way of actual exclusion from power, they damp the hopes and repress the energies of all; they wound the reputation of the whole professors of the catholic religion, and lower their rank in the scale of society. Hope and fear are passions opposite in their nature, yet analogous in their operation; when you repress hope, you mortify the feelings of a thousand, whom you do not positively injure in the vulgar sense of the word; when you excite a general alarm, you may agitate the passions of multitudes, whom the evil so much dreaded can never overtake. It is insulting to tell the catholics, that as a body they should not complain of the disabilities imposed on them, because a very inconsiderable proportion of them can ever attain the honours and the power from which they complain of a peremptory exclusion. As a question of the actual enjoyment of power and emolument, the catholic question is indeed nothing; but as a question of character and reputation in society; as a point of honour to which high-minded men must be acutely sensible, it is every thing which can agitate their feelings and rouse them to exertion. Hope is the grand stimulus to every noble enterprise; the spring which gives life to society, and generates all its comforts and refinements; yet hope is denied to all by a system which is vainly represented as affecting only a small number of the people. By the disabilities on the catholics, the actual enjoyment of power is denied but to a few; yet the deadening influence of such laws extends to all who may under a free government aspire to its highest dignities; that is, embraces the whole population which professes the Roman catholic religion. It is vain and extravagant, therefore, in the highest degree, to attempt to palliate the evils of any system of exclusion; they are great and prominent; and the only question is, whether a change may be effected without danger to the civil and religious institutions of the country, which we are all bound to defend, even *ad internecionem*.

It is an unfortunate circumstance that the enemies of catholic emancipation should have shielded themselves under the coronation oath, and should have entangled their cause with so much sophistry, which no talent could ever reconcile to common sense and upright feelings. To conscientious scruples existing in the breast of an illustrious individual, the loyalty and affection of his people might well pay the highest respect; the paternal cares and distinguished virtues of the sovereign displayed in a long reign, were more than sufficient to command the love and veneration of a generous people. Yet as the king of England is not responsible for any measure of policy, his ministers could not be bound by the private sentiments of their sovereign; and although it might have been highly imprudent in them to press a measure to which he was averse, and to which he could at the last stage have given his negative, still it was their duty, if they differed in opinion, to remonstrate with firmness, yet with respect, against sentiments which they could not approve, and to refuse encountering the danger of responsibility, while they were not enabled to exercise their legitimate and constitutional influence. Thus far it was at all times their duty to go; yet, in the whole circumstances of the case, it might

have been wise for ministers, as well as for the catholics themselves, to have refrained entirely from altercations, which must always have proved unavailing. The respect, however, which is due to the opinions of the sovereign, could extend only to a decent and becoming submission in circumstances believed to be temporary; but could never require a sacrifice of the sentiments which every man is entitled to express, even on the most delicate subjects. Hence it was boldly and justly declared on many different occasions, that the coronation oath opposed no real obstacle to the concession of the catholic claims; that the oath was taken by the king as executive magistrate, and not as a branch of the legislature, and that it imported only an obligation that he should act in his executive capacity agreeably to the laws of the land as established by parliament. If a different construction were put on the coronation oath, what would be the consequence? That no change could, at any time, be made in the laws either as to church or state, since the coronation oath comprehends both; that every thing which has already been done for the catholics amounted to a gross violation of the constitution; and that the legislative power of the British parliament, of which the king is the most venerable branch, must be annihilated. But this argument could not bear consideration for a moment; while it was considered as the offspring of an honourable delicacy in the highest quarter, it was with becoming patience endured; but no sooner was it brought forward as the weapon of bigotry, than it was consigned to merited scorn.

It is not, therefore, because a large proportion of the people may with impunity be excluded from the benefits of the constitution; nor because the catholics have no claim of right to an alteration of the laws; nor because the British constitution is essentially founded on a narrow and exclusive system; nor is it because the catholics are slightly affected by the existing disabilities, of which the coronation oath for ever forbids the removal, that enlightened men have hesitated about the unqualified concession of the catholic claims; such arguments are weak and unavailing, and prove only the pious, but ignorant zeal of the disputants, their laudable eagerness to rush into the contest, without the armour which is required to sustain the fury of the assault. The wars of politicians are in general very well supplied with recruits; yet we can scarcely recollect any great conflict of this kind into which a more undisciplined rabble has been enlisted on both sides, than that which has come forward to decide this awful contest. The pretended advocates of catholic emancipation, for scurrility, insolence, and baseness, have outdone every thing which was before known, even in this discontented island. Every threadbare argument, every vulgar piece of slander, every obscene thing, which could be purloined from newspapers, reviews, and other magazines of such interesting curiosities, has been seized by the miserable conscripts to hide their nakedness; yet so beggarly and scandalous is the appearance of the corps, and so disorderly their movements, that some of their own chiefs have declined to march along with them in their career of turbulence and treason. On the absurd notions of some of the anti-catholics, as they call themselves, we have already remarked, as we think, with impartial severity; yet stupid as they are, their quiet and peaceable demeanour is no more to be compared to the noisy and obtrusive vulgarity of their antagonists, than a methodistical meeting to an Irish fair. It is easy to enumerate and correct the errors of the protestants;

they are comparatively few in number, because those who have fallen into them are sincere, although misguided; but he who would endeavour to detect the folly and expose the baseness of those who advocate the cause of the catholics by sophistry and slander, would undertake a task impracticable from its extent, and utterly unprofitable from the vulgar stupidity of those whom he should vainly attempt to instruct or reform.

The loudest assertor of the rights of the catholics, if he possess any share of common sense or candour, or be at all capable of estimating the merits of this great question, will confess that a protestant government and people can never be required to admit the catholics to a participation of political power, if such an innovation should threaten with danger the protestant establishments of the country. It is not necessary to prove that the danger would certainly ensue, if the concessions were granted; for there is no such thing as certainty in political speculations; and if the statesman were to refuse to act till he were fully assured of the consequences of his deeds, the business of the world must either be brought to a stand, or entirely abandoned to the government of chance. Where the evil apprehended is of very great magnitude, even a slender probability of its occurrence will inspire a wise man with the utmost caution; not, indeed, with a degrading terror which would strike him to the ground, but with an erect energy, which, by enabling him to extend his views, may render his decision less rapid; but will at the same time make it infinitely more valuable. The enemies of catholic emancipation have been often described as timorous and imbecile; in our view of the matter, their firmness and energy have been far more conspicuous than those of their opponents. It is an easy thing to subvert and destroy; to cast away with a careless prodigality what was never earned by our own enterprise and toil; to sail down the stream of popular violence, and to purchase an easy and vile reputation by joining in the clamour of the multitude. As the raging billows of the ocean will cast up to the surface, and bear along by their force all that is worthless and obscene in the unfathomed caves of the deep, so the waves of popular commotion have often impelled into the general view, the veriest caitiffs of the community; yet the lofty rock which restrains the violence and contemns the fury of these noisy assailants, which with awful grandeur stands forth the protector of the rich and gay luxuriance behind, has never been mistaken for the emblem of weakness and timidity. The advocates of catholic emancipation have been anxious to represent the cause of their enemies as one which has been deserted by the people, and have often declared that the tide of popular feeling runs so strong on their own side, that every obstacle must soon give way. We put it therefore to the common sense of our readers to determine, to which side the praise of courage and resolution is justly due; whether to those who from convenience prefer the stronger party, or to their antagonists, who, in spite of insolence, reproach, and intimidation, boldly interposed themselves to stem the tide of popular violence, and preserve the ark of the constitution from the fury of the tempest by which it is assailed.

These reflections have been extorted by the domineering extravagance of the assertors of the catholic claims; we are well aware that they have but little to do with the real merits of the question; and we gladly return therefore to an enquiry into the leading points connected with this controversy. The danger of admitting the catholics

to the enjoyment of political power, is the only fair ground of their exclusion; and we have already admitted with the utmost freedom, that all the subtilties which have been opposed to the catholic claims, have not the weight of a feather in the balance. We come therefore to the only question which can divide the enlightened advocates and enemies of catholic emancipation; would it be safe for the protestant establishment, and the political liberties of the country, that the claims of the catholics should be conceded?

To denounce any class of the people as the enemies of the constitution, and to found upon this charge an argument for excluding them from the privileges enjoyed by their fellow subjects, is an invidious task; yet it may not be the less necessary to be performed. The work of adulation is easy as it is base; compliments may be heaped upon the loyalty and fidelity of the catholics with a small expence of wit and a large sacrifice of sincerity; but the memory of their past transactions, and the knowledge of their present temper, will bring down scorn on the unmerited panegyrics. Yet the charge of enmity towards the existing order of things, which has so often been brought against the professors of the catholic religion, does not affect their moral or political character so much as some persons are willing to suppose; the same antipathy would probably fill a protestant bosom against catholic ascendancy; the feeling is the natural consequence of an entire difference of opinion on the most sacred and interesting of subjects, about which no good man can well maintain a neutrality. When we speak of enmity towards the constitution, we may be justly called upon to explain what we mean by a word which has so often been prostituted, and about which no settled notions seem to be entertained. With reference therefore to the present argument, we mean by "the constitution," the ascendency of the protestant religion in the government of the civil affairs of the country, the security of the protestant church as established by law, and the predominance of the protestant interest in the imperial legislature. This is the constitution which we should wish to see defended against the invasions of catholic enmity and ambition; these are the invaluable advantages which have been derived from the glorious struggles of our forefathers, of whom it has become fashionable among the witlings of the day to speak with contempt and derision. Have the catholics an interest, and do they cherish a desire, to accomplish a change in these particulars? and would they, if their claims were conceded, have a chance of attaining their object? These are the questions, on the solution of which the merits of the catholic claims must be decided.

That the catholics would have an interest in destroying the protestant ascendancy, seems to be very obvious, if it be not supposed that they are exempted from the ordinary influence of human motives, and that their piety or generosity exalts them above the vulgar objects of human ambition. They are plainly told, even by those who ask concessions for them, that their claims can be listened to only because their sect must always continue *subordinate* in the imperial parliament; because, as a body professing certain religious opinions, they are to be of no weight or consequence, and are to have no influence whatever on the conduct of public affairs. Ask their present advocates why emancipation could not be safely recommended to the Irish parliament, and they will tell you it was on account of the preponderating influence which the catholics would have gained in the legis-

lature of Ireland; in other words, they will avow the most marked distrust of those whom they patronize. Why would they have the claims of the catholics now conceded? because the catholics can never, in their view of matters, become formidable in a parliament which is composed of so vast a proportion of protestant members. The very grounds, therefore, which are now assigned for emancipation, imply that rooted jealousy of the principles of the catholics, which their advocates are on other occasions so inconsistent as to disavow; and would the catholic members on their admission to the British parliament, *could* they, as men of spirit and of honour, forget the ignominious considerations on which they had been received? Could they lose all recollection of the long and violent resistance which the protestants have made to their demands? Could they sincerely coalesce with those who have shown towards them so much hostility, and who, even in granting their last boon, had justified it by assuming the eternal insignificance of the catholic body? The thing is absurd and incredible, without supposing in the catholics a more abject and submissive spirit than ever disgraced any body of freemen.

The influence of religious principles over the moral and political conduct of mankind, is not so slender as a few freethinkers and philosophists would endeavour to persuade the world. They feel in themselves that freezing indifference which is symptomatic of the worst diseases of the mind; they believe that the atmosphere around them is warped with the same bitter frost, and that all those who are subject to its action, are stupified and benumbed like themselves. They know not that there is a genial heat in the unsophisticated sentiments of mankind, which will for ever preserve them from the frigidity of which a few pretenders to philosophy may become the victims, and that favourable seasons periodically recur, when the tide of religious enthusiasm will mount so high as to demand every precaution for resisting its ravages. The perseverance and attachment of men to the system of religion in which they have been educated, is too often proportioned to its rigorous formality or flagrant absurdity—whether it be that burdensome ceremonies, like objects of taste originally disagreeable, become necessary by use, or that we are most highly animated in defence of opinions, which those who differ from us treat with the most signal derision. Whatever may be the explanation, the fact, at all events, is certain, that the catholic religion exercises an influence over its votaries, which, to philosophers, seems exactly proportioned to the burden of its rites and the folly of its tenets; that it pervades the whole of their speculations and actions; and that its spirit exercises an absolute control over their whole moral and political conduct. We speak of those who are sincere in professing the tenets of the catholic religion; and surely their advocates will not insult the catholic population of Ireland by insinuating that this description does not apply to the greater number of them. The protestants, it is very generally allowed, are, from causes into which it is needless to enquire, far inferior to their catholic brethren in zeal and enthusiasm, in decent regard for the ceremonies of their religion, and daring enterprise for its prosperity. It were idle to attempt a nice calculation of the additional energy which an individual or a body of men may acquire in affairs either of violence or intrigue by the heat of religious zeal, which is the very spark required for the explosion of all the force with

which the mind of man is endowed. The expansive and impetuous force of steam, or of gunpowder, compared with the quiescent and harmless materials out of which such energies are created, will afford but an inadequate illustration of catholic zeal and protestant apathy. Should the field be opened for a contest betwixt the subtle and persevering ambition of the catholics, animated by religious enthusiasm, and that tranquil, forbearing, and unsuspecting moderation, which are the indisputable characteristics of the protestants of the present day, it is not more difficult to see for which side victory must declare, than to anticipate the consequences to society which must result from the ultimate triumph of the popish religion.

We are far from insinuating a belief that the persecutions and horrors would be renewed at the present day, which made the catholic name in former times so odious to the protestants of all denominations. These days of barbarism, it is to be hoped, have for ever passed away; yet it is impossible to answer for the violence and malignity of human passions when once fairly let loose, flushed with success, and intoxicated by power. The man who should, twenty years before the French revolution, have predicted that an enlightened people would, at the close of the eighteenth century, have acted all the enormous and disgusting tragedies which signalized the progress of that event, would, no doubt, have brought down on himself a heavy load of ridicule and insult; yet it is not the less true, that such dreadful enormities were committed in the face of all Europe. We have no wish to impeach the moral or political principles of the catholics of the present day, or to refuse our belief to the declaration of their tenets, which was so solemnly given forth by many learned bodies on the continent; yet we have always thought that better information might have been obtained as to the sentiments of the Irish catholics, in whom alone Great Britian can feel an interest, than that which was received from the foreign universities. Many speculative opinions are entertained by the learned long before they reach the vulgar; and many such opinions *never* penetrate so far as to influence the great body of the people. It was quite immaterial to the English government what were the sentiments entertained by the profound doctrine of the seminaries of the continent; but it was of the utmost importance, with a view to any measure of legislation, to know what were the feelings, and what the belief, of the Irish peasantry. But we shall suppose that all is perfectly right · that the catholic religion is in many important points essentially changed; and that the anti-social doctrines, which in former times constituted part of its creed, are now exploded; yet our doubts as to the safety of the measure, denominated catholic emancipation, are by no means removed. We assume, of course, that the British constitution is worth preserving; that the protestant establishment, and the undisputed ascendancy of protestant principles in parliament, is of the very essence of the constitution; for with persons who would dispute about these points, we should scorn to maintain any controversy. With reference to the catholics themselves, we maintain only what both the early and more recent history of their religion bears us out in asserting,—that they are animated by a zeal and enthusiasm for its prosperity, which far transcends the moderation of protestantism. We affirm, that in a contest betwixt persevering zealots and lukewarm professors, the fervour of enthusiasm will supply the place of num-

bers; and we must repeat, that the very pretence on which the catholics are now to be admitted into parliament, and to the higher offices of the state—the pretence of their insignificance—is such, as will naturally array them against the protestants, and give ten-fold energy to their struggle for the mastery. It will give them a powerful and a permanent interest in the overthrow of that ascendancy which dares to proclaim their eternal subordination; and he must be a mere driveller indeed who does not, in such circumstances, discover the origin of a contest far more momentous than all the controversies maintained by all the factions which have flourished since the Revolution.

Would the catholics, however, have the power of accomplishing their ambitious schemes, and of establishing themselves on the ruins of protestantism? Their numbers in parliament would be but small compared with those of the protestants; and it would be too much to say with confidence, that their zeal and intrigue *must* secure them an ascendency. But it cannot be necessary to prove so much as this; it is enough to indicate in what manner so melancholy a catastrophe is not improbable.—The influence of the crown has become very great in both houses of parliament; a prince might ascend the throne, not openly professing, but secretly encouraging the catholic religion, and with even the limited aid which the catholics could afford him, he might be able to execute his purposes. If he were not a madman, he would not hastily venture on any measures of open hostility towards the protestants, but with the help of his own mighty influence in the legislature, with the aid of the influence and property of the catholics, and with the assistance also of foreign alliances, we do not say that he could subdue the resistance of the protestants, but he might succeed in reviving controversies, similar to those which drove the Stuarts from the throne. It would then become necessary to encounter anew the storms of revolution; and if the minds of the people should not sink under the pressure of the moment—if they should not become the martyrs of tyranny and persecution—if they should still cling with fervour and energy to that constitution, of which the essence is protestant ascendency, although the honours of the triumph would be theirs, the guilt which should expose them to so fiery a trial, would not be the less an object of their just indignation and vengeance.

We can discover nothing in the precedent taken from the policy of Henry the Fourth of France, on which Mr Canning dilated so largely, that is applicable to the state of this country. Many things are possible to a vigorous despotism, which would be very unsafe under a free constitution of government; where the whole power of the state is vested in the monarch, if he have capacity for the trust, he need not fear the most bitter animosities of faction. Henry the Fourth did not, by the edict of Nantes, give any *substantial* or *independent* power to his protestant subjects; he still remained the absolute master of their destinies just as much as he was before he issued that famous ordinance. In an English House of Commons, however, the whole powers of the realm have been justly said under different forms to reside; he who is admitted to the functions of a senator, therefore, shares in the supreme powers of the state, and obtains, of course, a consequence and authority which no subject of monarchical France ever possessed. He becomes dangerous also as he becomes powerful; and in such circumstances there is no ground for supposing that the experiment made so long ago in France could be safely repeated in England.

We can, upon the whole, discover no way in which the claims of the catholics can be reconciled with the natural feelings, or just demands of the protestants; and much as we regret the obstacles which stand opposed to them, we must fairly own, that we can see no prospect of their speedy removal.

CHAP. IX.

Affairs of America. Retrospective View of the Disputes betwixt the British and American Governments. Progress of the Differences.

THE relations subsisting betwixt Great Britain and the United States of America, had for many years exhibited a very singular aspect. The nations were not indeed in a state of open war with each other; but the conflict of opposite pretensions, the angry discussion of many intricate questions of international law, the charges and recriminations which had for a series of years formed the only subject of their diplomatic intercourse, had diffused over both countries a spirit of distrust and animosity, which could find in war alone its natural gratification. As this unhappy result was actually produced in the course of the present year, it may not be uninteresting to take a hasty retrospect of the causes which led to an event so much lamented by the enlightened men of both countries.

It seems to be generally thought that the Americans, whether right or wrong in the principles of public law, on which they so obstinately insisted, (a point which shall be afterwards examined) might have brought matters to an amicable arrangement, without any material sacrifice even of the questionable maxims for which they contended—for never was the spirit of conciliation carried farther than by the British government in its intercourse with the ministers of the United States. England had many obvious reasons for endeavouring to avert the calamities of an American war at this period; she was engaged in a very arduous contest in Europe,—she had the most numerous and formidable enemies to contend with,—she had the interests of her commerce to maintain, which are always dependent in some degree on a friendly connexion with America; and she had, moreover, a natural and a generous aversion to conquer, before she could bring herself to draw the sword against a people connected with her by a resemblance in language, laws, and institutions. These were motives sufficiently powerful to have restrained the intemperance of the English ministers, even if they had not been otherwise remarkable for mildness and forbearance. Had the principles of international law advanced by the Americans been as sound as an impartial examination of them may perhaps shew that they were unreasonable, still it would have been in the power of America, had she sincerely desired peace, to have preserved it by an honourable compromise on those points which had created the greatest difference of opinion, or

almost by any thing short of an absolute surrender of the rights and honour of Great Britain, which it was rather too much in any people to expect. But if there be any point in recent history which even the arts of faction cannot involve in doubt, it is this,—that the government of America was not sincerely desirous of peace with Great Britain,—that it took all possible means to disturb the moderation and provoke the anger of the British ministers; and that upon all occasions it betrayed symptoms of the most unaccountable partiality to the despotism of France. Those who have studied the history of American affairs for the last three or four years, will be well aware of the grounds on which this opinion has been formed; and a curious enquiry thus suggests itself,—how it should have happened that the only republican government in the world should, at the greatest crisis of affairs, have combined with the most odious of despotisms against a country which has always been recognised as an illustrious model of practical freedom, and which was at this very moment engaged in a grand effort to vindicate the independence of nations.

In attempting to account for this singular phenomenon in politics, something must, no doubt, be allowed for the yet unextinguished animosity produced by our unfortunate colonial war. It may be thought that prejudices so antiquated must long since have become the exclusive property of the vulgar; and must have given way, in the minds of enlightened men, to considerations more recent in point of time, and more important in their practical influence on American affairs. It is a common belief in Europe, however, that the government of America is, to a more than ordinary degree, under the discipline and controul of the rabble; and if indeed there be any truth in the common speculations as to the motives of its hostility towards Great Britain, it must be very far gone in vulgar absurdity. National prejudices so indiscriminating and so mischievous, are every where but in America confined to the lowest ranks;—they have been long banished out of the more respectable circles even of private life, and could never find their way into the councils of a great European state without devoting it to the unsparing ridicule and contempt of its neighbours.

With the narrow prejudices of the American mob, other causes combined to hasten a rupture with England.—The commercial system,—that miserable tissue of blunders which had so long kept down the growing prosperity of Europe,—had been wisely exploded by the most enlightened of the European states before the French revolution. The enlarged views and fine talents of the political philosophers who cast a lustre round the close of the last century, had triumphed over every obstacle which ignorance and prejudice could oppose; and England and France at last discovered that they had a mutual interest in the commercial greatness of each other. They did more than this; they reduced their principles to practice, and embodied them in a treaty which, if not unexceptionable in all respects, was at least a great step towards the triumph of genuine philosophy over the errors and absurdities of the old political school. The French revolution, however, deranged all the plans of enlightened men,—it engendered a rancour and animosity betwixt the nations more violent and pernicious than the ancient jealousies of the commercial system, and terminated at last in a despotism which threw France and her dependencies far back in the scale of improvement. The commercial system was revived by the new French government with a barbarous and destructive

fury which had never been even contemplated at any former period; the refined and generous principles which so many great men had contributed to establish, were forgotten; their works were neglected or proscribed; the progress of human improvement was arrested, and all seemed about to become a sacrifice to the rude genius of an overwhelming despotism. Even during the short interval of repose which succeeded the treaty of Amiens, the maxims of the new government were sufficiently indicated in the impolitic restraints and prohibitions by which the commercial intercourse of the countries was fettered. England did not indeed pretend that such measures afforded a legitimate ground for hostilities, since every nation being supreme within itself, has a right to determine whether it shall receive the commodities of foreign states; but if the commercial animosity of France could not have justified England in declaring war, it certainly afforded her a solid ground for entertaining jealousy against a power thus hostile to her interests, and called upon her to watch all the proceedings of that power with the most scrupulous vigilance.

The unrivalled commercial greatness of England at this period, surpassing all that history records, and all that even the most flattering visions of her statesmen had contemplated, was an object of bitter and unceasing mortification to the politicians of France,—her naval supremacy, which was founded on the prosperity of her commerce, and promised for it an indefinite duration, filled their minds with jealousy and apprehension. These feelings rose to the highest pitch after the peace of Amiens. Europe seemed to learn, for the first time, that the commercial grandeur of England possessed a stability which had never been supposed to belong to this species of power. It had withstood the shock of the most extended and desolating warfare; and at the close of a contest of long duration and unparalleled fury, in which the empire had sometimes contended with the combined energies of Europe, it not only remained untouched, but had mightily extended itself during every year of hostility. The war had terminated in the establishment of a naval power which had gathered strength by all the efforts made to weaken it; and had now risen so high as to bid defiance to all rivalry. The rulers of France reflected on these matters with bitterness corresponding to the disappointment of their hopes; they despaired of being able to meet this enormous power by any ordinary efforts; and could think of no way of checking its further growth, but by the entire sacrifice of their own commerce and resources. They hoped, that by excluding all the productions of British industry from their ports, and by prohibiting the use of British commodities throughout France and her dependencies, they might gradually undermine this overgrown power; while their depraved policy at the same time sought to inculcate a belief among their subjects, that such measures would promote the industry of France. Thus was a system established (if indeed so rude and impolitic a thing deserve the name) in direct opposition to all the views of modern science; a system which was in truth but a barbarous extension of the old theories, which so many enlightened men had endeavoured to banish for ever from the world.

The measures thus adopted by France had a twofold connection with the affairs of America. In the first place, the American statesmen entertained much the same feelings with respect to the commercial and naval greatness of England with their friends in France; their understandings were in general of the same character, and

their tempers quite as violent. They, as well as the French politicians, wished to make their country great by commerce; and as the established ascendency of England appeared to them to stand in the way, they scrupled not about the means which might be employed to remove it. Their minds were not susceptible of a generous emulation; envy was the only feeling which a near view of the naval and commercial greatness of England could excite in their breasts. They had no dread of France, who had in the course of the war lost her commerce, her colonies, and her ships; whose power never came into contact with their own; whose resources of all kinds were devoted to the prosecution of a war, in the issue of which they vainly thought that America had no interest. But they hated England, her commerce and her power, as cordially even as the members of the French government did: and had America been as little dependent on commerce as France, had her citizens been as indifferent to its real interests, or had her rulers possessed the same despotic sway over their fortunes which the French government had assumed over those of its own subjects, it is probable that Mr Maddison and his friends would at once have followed the example of Buonaparte, by prohibiting all commercial intercourse with the British empire. But the Americans had not yet been wholly overawed by their rulers; and it became necessary therefore to pursue a more indirect and insidious course with them, than that which had been followed by Buonaparte in his dealings with a people whom he had entirely subdued.

The measures pursued by France in the execution of her anti-commercial system, suspended for a while the international law of Europe, and afforded to the rulers of America the pretext which they had so long desired, for gratifying their animosity against England. The commercial hostility of France during the peace, although never considered by Great Britain as a ground for war, was not however forgotten when hostilities were renewed: and the English ministers therefore determined to employ the naval power which was at their command, to the annihilation of the foreign commerce of their enemy. Their measures were such as the interests of England demanded, and which a state of hostility fully justified; and they completely succeeded in accomplishing the object which they had in view. The foreign commerce of France was annihilated—her industry checked—her resources wasted; and her ruler discovered, when it was too late, how gross were the errors which he had committed. It was impossible, however, to retract; and he resolved on carrying his commercial war to the utmost pitch of fury. In this temper did Buonaparte issue his famous Berlin decree, which renewed all the old prohibitory regulations, and ludicrously declared the British islands to be in a state of blockade, at the very moment when the fleets of Great Britain actually blockaded all the ports of France and her dependencies. Neutral vessels bound to or returning from a British port were made liable to capture by this singular decree.—Matters remained for some time in this state, the French ruler being unable to execute his decree, and the British government being averse to advance further in so barbarous a warfare. But having again proved successful in his northern campaign, Buonaparte resumed with fresh vigour his prohibitory system; he confirmed all the provisions of the Berlin decree; excluded the merchandise of Great Britain and her colonies from the ports of France and her dependencies, and accompanied these prohibitions with the severest penalties. Every article of British produce

was searched for, seized, and committed to the flames*; while the most cruel punishments were inflicted on the subjects of France who dared to violate these arbitrary laws.—This violent system had now reached its height, and it seemed to be the determination of the French ruler to have it executed with the greatest rigour; the British government, therefore, could no longer, either in prudence or honour, delay the retaliation which its power enabled it to inflict. The famous Orders in Council were therefore issued; all trade to France or her dependencies was strictly prohibited; all vessels, of whatever nation, which ventured to engage in this trade, were declared liable to seizure, and France with her dependencies was thus reduced to that state of blockade with which she had vainly threatened the British islands. The orders in council admitted but of one single exception to this general blockade of the French empire: the French decrees had declared all vessels liable to seizure which had touched at a British port; the orders in council, to counteract this provision, declared on the other hand, that only such ships as were in that situation should be permitted to sail for France. Thus did the utter extinction of the foreign trade of France result as a consequence of the very measures of her own government; measures which no despotism, how ignorant soever, would have ventured to adopt, had it not trusted to a power which effectually silences all popular opinion.

Two questions have been put on the subject of these orders in council, Were they founded in justice, and were they supported by reasons of expediency? On the first point, with which alone foreign powers had any concern, the advocates of these measures had a very easy task to perform; for nothing surely can be more obvious to those who know any thing of the law of nations, than the right of Great Britain to retaliate upon her enemies their own violence and injustice.—What has been called the rule of the war 1756, forms the first link in that chain of commercial restrictions, which in the sequel became so complicated; and the perfect equity of this rule has always appeared manifest to the most enlightened minds. France, like the other European powers who possessed distant colonies, endeavoured to secure for herself the monopoly of their markets; and during peace strictly prohibited all strangers from carrying on trade with them. When she goes to war with England, however, the superiority of her enemy's naval power compels her to relax the rigour of her colonial policy; and she is willing that neutral vessels should bring home the produce of her American settlements. By the interference of these neutrals, however, the English are manifestly deprived of the advantages which their naval power would otherwise secure to them; of the chance of captures, and the certainty of reducing the enemy's colonies without striking a blow. But no neutral can, upon any pretext, claim greater advantages *after*, than she enjoyed *before* the war; she has a right to insist that her relative condition to the belligerents shall not be rendered worse by the hostilities in which they may engage, but she can have no right to demand that it should be improved. By admission, however, to the colonial trade of France during war, a trade from which neutrals are excluded by France herself during peace, the condition of the neutral is manifestly improved; it is improved at the expence of England, who is deprived of the chance of captures and conquests which her power would otherwise give her; and it is improved to the great gain of France, whom the interference of neutrals protects against the overwhelming power of her enemies. There

can be no doubt then as to the equity of the rule of the war 1756, that rule of which France and America have so loudly complained. The order in council of January, 1807, which was not issued till after the Berlin decree had been published by Buonaparte, was also justifiable on the very same principle; it went merely to exclude neutrals during war from a branch of the enemy's trade to which they had no access in time of peace. So far then the measures adopted by the British government rested on the clearest principles of international law.

And what were the measures adopted by the French? had they any foundation in the acknowledged principles and usages of public law? The decree of Berlin prohibited all commerce in British commodities; France indeed had a right to do this, how fatal soever the measure might be to her own interest and that of her dependencies; and had the Berlin decree gone no farther, although it might have had the effect of embittering the hostile spirit of the two countries, it neither could have justified, nor would it have been met by any specific act of retaliation on the part of England. But the French ruler, in a moment of despair, ventured to declare the British islands in a state of blockade, and to interdict all neutrals from trading with a British port. This was a violent infringement of the law of nations; a daring insult on neutral rights; an act of mad injustice, which loudly called upon all parties to avenge themselves on its authors. The honour of England pre-eminently demanded that she should repel this outrage with becoming spirit; and although she at first seemed willing to treat so impotent a measure with contempt alone, and to wait till she might learn its result on the conduct of America, yet the right still remained to her of exercising retaliation when the proper season should arrive. The date of the publication of the Milan decree appeared to her to be that season; time enough had been allowed to the different neutral powers to remonstrate against the conduct of the enemy; they had failed to improve the opportunity afforded them, and England could no longer remain silent when a new decree was issued, more unjust and insulting than its predecessor; more absurd and barbarous than any thing which had ever occurred among civilized nations. She, therefore, issued her orders in council, which in effect reduced the French empire to a state of blockade, and cut off the whole commerce which neutrals had hitherto carried on with the enemy. Of these measures France of course had no right to complain; and a very little reflection will be sufficient to shew that if America had any just grounds of remonstrance, she should have offered them to France alone, and not to England, against whom she was so prompt to bring forward accusations.

France was the first of the belligerents to violate the law of nations. She issued the Berlin decree, and followed it up by the other, dated at Milan, by both of which the Americans and all other neutrals were prevented from maintaining their usual intercourse with England. These measures were in their *principle* a direct invasion of neutral rights, and it was therefore the duty of neutral powers to have remonstrated against them with firmness. But America did not thus resist; and she in this manner committed herself with the enemy. It was a principle maintained by Buonaparte on all occasions, that those who did not resist an injury offered them by either of the belligerents, were no longer to be considered as neutrals; that by their acquiescence, they made themselves parties to the cause of the enemy, and that of course they were

to be treated in the same way as if they had actually declared war against the nation to whose interests they stood opposed. It was on some principle of this kind, that he declared the ships of all neutrals which submitted to what he called the tyranny of the English, *denationalized*—an uncouth and barbarous word, invented to serve the occasions of these unhappy times, when Europe was no longer under the guidance of wise and sound principles. To submit to any thing which France pretended to call a departure from the international law of Europe, was therefore held sufficient to denationalize the ships of neutral powers, and although the application of this principle may frequently have been erroneous, there can be no doubt that the principle itself was just. If France violated the law of nations, as she unquestionably did by her Berlin decree; and if America calmly acquiesced in this insult on her rights, there can be no sort of doubt that she thus made herself a party in the quarrel which France had with England; that she in effect combined with the common enemy, and that her ships were, to use the jargon of the French government, clearly "denationalized." Had England therefore meditated hostility towards America; had she been anxious to avail herself of a pretext for making a quarrel; had she been desirous of exacting from a secret enemy the full penalties of her accession to the cause of the other belligerent; she might very well have proceeded, on the simple fact of American acquiescence in French violence, at once to have treated the Americans as her enemies.

A candid exposition, therefore, of the rights and duties of belligerents and neutrals, must exculpate England from all blame in issuing her orders in council. It is the doctrine of all jurists, that the rights of neutrals during war are precisely the same as during peace; that neutral powers are entitled to demand of either belligerent, that in their intercourse with the other they shall not be subjected to greater restraints than they experienced during a season of tranquillity; but no neutral is entitled to require more than this, or can expect that a belligerent should sacrifice to the convenience of the neutral, any of the just rights which she may acquire by a state of war. The principle of this doctrine is obvious; no nation can expect that a foreign power is to sacrifice its own immediate interest to her convenience or advantage. When we come to consider these general principles with reference to the case of America, their force seems to be irresistible. Suppose that America had been entirely out of the question; that her name were unknown in Europe, and that she had still remained in her ancient state of dependence on the British empire; suppose for a moment, that the question had arisen entirely betwixt Great Britain and France; that France had violated the law of nations, by presuming to declare the British islands in a state of blockade, and then let any impartial person say, what is the policy which Great Britain would have been entitled and called upon to pursue? She would clearly have had a right to do the same thing to France which France had attempted to do to her; that is, she would have been entitled to declare the French empire in a state of blockade, and to have followed up the blockade with all possible vigour. Such then was her undoubted right; and will it be pretended that America—that a foreign nation was entitled to interfere with her in the exercise of her rights? It is of no importance to enquire, whether the blockade of France was, or was not, on the whole beneficial to England; that was a

matter for England alone to consider; it was a question with which America had no sort of concern; and it is of the rights of America alone that we now speak. America, then, had no right to complain of the exercise of the powers which England possessed, as one of the great European belligerents,—which she derived immediately from that state of hostilities, in which she, and not America, was involved, and which of course she had a right to improve to her own advantage, and to the annoyance of her enemies.

There is still another light in which this momentous question may be considered, with reference to the established law of nations. It is in the power of England to exclude America or any other nation from trading with herself, and it is in the power of France to do the same. Suppose that both nations had mutually agreed to treat America in this manner, could she have ventured to complain? But it is the same thing whether these powers do so directly, and in conjunction, or indirectly by means not less efficacious; whether they exclude the Americans by the operation of a peaceful league betwixt themselves, or by a series of measures adopted during war. If France, by attempting to exclude all neutrals from English ports, communicated to her enemies a right to retaliate, can the Americans interfere, or are they in a worse condition than if the belligerents had separately, and in a time of profound peace, determined to renounce all commercial intercourse with them? Surely they could not with justice complain; they could not demand that their condition should be *improved* by a state of European warfare; they could not claim the forbearance of England towards her enemies, for the sole purpose of conferring a favour upon neutrals; they could not, in short, upon any sound principle, object to the orders in council.

Different opinions were entertained on the question as to their expediency; and although these famous measures are said to have been in the first instance strongly pressed upon ministers by the mercantile interest, there can be no doubt, that the government was in some measure deserted by this powerful body, before the orders in council were finally repealed. The discussions which at intervals ensued on this subject, were signalized by the uncommon zeal and acuteness of the advocates on both sides; and an account of them in the order in which they occurred, will form not the least interesting branch of the history of public affairs for the present year.

Although the question arising out of the orders in council formed at first the chief subject of dispute betwixt Great Britain and America, yet in the course of the discussion, many other points were introduced scarcely less difficult of arrangement.—At the meeting of the American congress in the end of the preceding year, the speech delivered by the president gave evident indications of a very hostile spirit towards Great Britain; and as this speech was followed by a report of the committee of congress for foreign affairs, which was no less warlike, the hopes which had been entertained of an amicable arrangement seemed to vanish. The committee, with an affectation of impartiality, began by a general complaint as to the wrongs which America had sustained both from France and England, in the seizure of the property of the citizens of the United States, when peaceably pursuing their lawful commerce on the high seas; and reprobated the defence which had been offered by each party—that its acts of violence were merely retaliatory, on similar acts com-

mitted by its antagonist. The Americans, it was said, thus violently assailed, withdrew their citizens and property from the ocean, expecting redress from the justice of the belligerents; but having failed in this object, they had recourse to the non-intercourse and non-importation laws. To induce the European powers to return to a system of justice, they had offered commercial advantages to the belligerent which should first revoke its commercial edicts, and had agreed to impose more severe restrictions on the other.—And here every semblance of impartiality vanished from the report; which proceeded to announce that France, profiting by the friendly offers of the United States, had on 1st November, 1810, declared the repeal of the decree of Berlin; that the English were thus bound to have revoked their orders in council; but instead of this they had advanced still bolder pretensions; they had affected to deny the practical extinction of the French decrees, and had insisted that France should renounce the whole system of her commercial warfare against England, of which these decrees originally formed a part. That the exclusion of British produce and manufactures from France and the states in alliance with her, was a measure of commercial warfare with which the United States had no concern; and that France would never concede to the unauthorised demand of America, those rights which she considered as the most powerful engine of the war; that the outrages of England had not been confined to the commerce of the United States; that by the seizure of American seamen, which was still carried on with unabated rigour and severity, the greatest insult was offered to America; and that the only question now was, whether the Americans should tamely submit, or resist by those means which circumstances had placed within their reach; That it had now become the sacred duty of congress to call forth the patriotism and resources of the country; and the committee, therefore, earnestly recommended, "That the United States immediately be put in an armour and attitude demanded by the crisis, and corresponding with the national spirit and expectations." With this view, resolutions were recommended that the military establishment, authorised by the existing laws, should be completed; that an additional force of 10,000 regular troops, to serve for three years, should be immediately raised; that the president should be authorised to accept the service of 50,000 volunteers; that he should be empowered to order out, from time to time, such detachments of the militia as the public service might require; that the navy should be put in repair; and that the merchant vessels should immediately be armed to resist the force with which they might be assailed.

An account of the revenue of the United States, by which the objects of a warlike policy might be supported, was at the same time laid before congress. The revenue of America is derived from two sources; the duties on importation, and the sale of public lands. The duties on importation, it was admitted, would be diminished by a war with Great Britain; but even under such a deficit they were estimated at six millions of dollars; while the sale of public lands would produce above half a million more. A deficiency to the extent of two millions and a half on the general revenue would thus arise; and to meet this it was proposed that an addition of 50 per cent. should be made to the existing duties.—Such was the state of the American revenue with a view even to the peace establishment; and it was the principle of her government, that the increased ex-

penditure occasioned by war should be entirely provided for by loans. In the event of any farther deficiency, a restoration of the duties on salt, and a selection of "external taxes," as they were called, were recommended; and it was supposed that there would be no difficulty in raising the permanent revenue of the United States to nine millions of dollars per annum. The difficulty of raising the loans at home was foreseen; no chance of finding them abroad presented itself; and the American minister of finance was aware, that an interest much above that allowed by law would be necessary to secure a supply of money for the public service. Still, however, he was convinced that the loans might be negociated, and that no obstacle on this account would present itself to the measures, which were now obviously in the contemplation of the executive.

No sooner were these documents received in England, than it was universally believed that war with America had become inevitable. The report of the committee, indeed, breathed a very hostile spirit, and seemed to leave no room for conciliation or amicable arrangement. The whole of its reasonings were built on the assumption, that the French decrees had been really and practically annulled, an assumption which the daily conduct of France, and the experience of the American government, positively contradicted. The committee attempted to avail themselves of a quibbling distinction betwixt the international law asserted by France, and the municipal regulations established for governing the commerce of that country; yet as the French government continued to declare that it would admit no British goods, *although become the property of neutrals*, into the ports of France and her dependencies, the Americans were thus deprived of a branch of trade which they formerly enjoyed, and in which of course they had an unquestionable right still to engage. Even if the Berlin and Milan decrees had been fairly revoked as to their operation on the high seas, their principle was still retained to an extent which not only gave neutrals a fair right to complain, but called on America to resist the proceedings of the French government. Great Britain did not insist, as the committee affected to believe, that America should interfere with the domestic regulations or the warlike measures of the French; but she insisted that America should not make herself a party to the violence of France, by submitting to conditions which had never before been imposed on any neutral power. The blockade of the British islands, on a principle which America herself declared to be a violation of public law, since there was not a single vessel employed to enforce it, was still partially carried into effect by the submission of America. Even if the French decrees therefore had been rescinded, their repeal must have been altogether nugatory, since, by a municipal regulation which America defended, a palpable violation of neutral rights was still committed; neutral powers were still compelled to co-operate with France towards the injury of British commerce; and a principle was proclaimed which was altogether novel and extravagant. The Americans, therefore, had at this period no just grounds for going to war with England; nor did the exposition of their financial affairs give them much encouragement to hazard so violent a proceeding.

While a committee of the American legislature was busily engaged in denouncing the injustice of Great Britain, and apologising for the outrages of France, an affair of a serious nature oc-

curred at Savannah, in which the insolence of the French was exhibited in a very striking light. One evening, about the middle of November 1811, while two French privateers were lying in the above port, a rencontre took place between some American seamen and a party of men belonging to the privateers, in which three of the Americans were stabbed and severely wounded. The American seamen in the port were exasperated to the highest pitch; they determined to revenge themselves by destroying the privateers; and having assembled on the evening of the 15th, they set fire to one of them, and burnt her to the water's edge. The other privateer was taken possession of by a detachment of Savannah volunteers, by whom she was protected until between eleven and twelve at night, when the seamen procured a *lighter-boat* filled with tar and other combustibles, which they towed to the privateer, and obliged the guard to abandon her to her fate. She was of course speedily destroyed. The French in this instance were the aggressors; their insolence to the Americans was beyond endurance; yet had not the spirit of the people risen to take vengeance, it is probable that the government would not have thought of interfering.

The sentiments contained in the report of the committee were supported with great violence in the House of Representatives, and it was declared by one speaker to be the unanimous opinion of the committee, "that the encroachments of Great Britain were such as to demand war, as the only alternative to obtain justice." Some of the members descanted on the power of America to harass Great Britain as well on the ocean as by land; to exhaust her colonies, and destroy her trade by an active system of privateering. They boasted also of their ability to conquer Canada,—a threat which excited ridicule in England.—There were still many persons, however, who deprecated a war with America as one of the greatest evils to which this country could be exposed, and who indulged a hope that hostilities might be averted. No one surely could have desired a rupture with America on its own account; but it was difficult to discover how it could be avoided at this period, when the absurd pretensions of the American government were considered. They had already used the language of defiance; they boasted that they could destroy our commerce; that they could conquer Canada; and that upon war they had already resolved. To have yielded in such circumstances would have been unwise, because it would have been yielding to menace and insult. A repeal of the orders in council at this season would have been imputed to fear; and it is certain, that America had already determined not to rest satisfied even with such a concession. There is a prudence which is wise, and there is also a false and despicable prudence, the result not of caution but of fear. The British ministers had wisely determined to act on the principle so well unfolded by Mr Burke, "That in small, weakly states, a timely compromise has often been the means, and the only means, of drawing out their puny existence. But a great state is too much envied, too much dreaded, to find safety in humiliation. To be secure it must be respected. Power, and eminence, and consideration, are things not to be begged. They must be commanded, and they who supplicate for mercy from others, can never hope for justice through themselves."—In one respect, perhaps, the conduct of the British government was not altogether deserving of approbation. The ministers were determined to concede nothing

to the Americans from fear; but they were resolved, and perhaps too obstinately resolved, to let their enemies follow their own plans, and to avoid being the first to draw the sword. They imagined it to be of advantage to cast on America the odium of first resorting to hostilities; but perhaps they persevered in this system too long, after it had been announced from America that war was determined on. The enemy declared, that, although his resolves were fixed, he would not commence hostilities till his preparations had been completed; and the British government allowed him to finish his preparations, and thus lost the chances of attacking a known and bitter enemy by surprise. There was no longer any hope of an amicable adjustment. The war party had obtained an overwhelming superiority of numbers in congress; and nothing could moderate the fury with which they were animated. To have struck the first blow in such circumstances, might have been a wise, and surely would have been a vigorous policy.

With the view, however, of averting the evils of war with America, Mr Whitbread, on the 13th of February, moved in the House of Commons, that an address should be presented to the Prince Regent, praying that he would give directions to lay before the House copies of all correspondence which had passed betwixt the British and American ministers from the 1st January, 1810, to the latest period, together with the documents referred to in the correspondence.—In support of this motion, it was observed, that although the governments of both countries had from the beginning professed to be actuated by the most friendly and conciliatory dispositions, the breach betwixt England and America had been widened from day to day, till it appeared that war between the two countries must be the inevitable consequence of the perseverance of England in her present system; that the information demanded by this motion was already before the whole world, with the exception of the two houses of parliament; that it had been the practice of the House, when it entertained suspicions that the business of the state was not well conducted, to require information from the executive power; and that the only ground upon which such information had ever been refused was, that a disclosure might disturb or impede the pending negociations; That as the information required was already before the world, no such plea could in this case be offered. From a perusal of the papers, it appeared that the conduct of those who managed the negociations had been very culpable, yet it was impossible to bring a charge against them till the documents were produced; that the British ministers at home had behaved with the greatest inattention to the American envoy, and had shewn a neglect amounting almost to diplomatic incivility, while our ministers in the United States had acted in a manner scarcely less repulsive. The conduct of Mr Jackson and Mr Foster while in America, had not been conciliatory; while the correspondence of the Marquis Wellesley with Mr Pinckney, which commenced in January, 1809, and terminated in February, 1810, had been such as to raise the indignation of the American government. The behaviour of Mr Pinckney, on the other hand, had been deserving of great praise. When he entered on the duties of his mission, a strong feeling existed in America in consequence of what had occurred in the course of Mr Jackson's embassy; and the Americans were naturally anxious as to the character of the person who was to be named by Great Britain

to renew the negociation. On the 2d of January, 1809, Mr Pinckney wrote to the Marquis Wellesley on the subject, but no answer was given to this letter till the 14th of March. On the 15th, Mr Pinckney again wrote to Lord Wellesley respecting the English system of blockade,—a subject most interesting to America;—but to this letter he did not receive an answer for more than a fortnight. On the 30th of April, Mr Pinckney wrote to Lord Wellesley on the subject of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, but to this letter he never received any answer at all; and a complaint which he made against the infamous practice of forging ship's papers in London, and making an open traffic of them, was treated with the same neglect. That many other instances had occurred, in which the communications of the American minister had been treated in a manner not less contemptuous, and in particular to his letter of the 15th of September to Lord Wellesley on the subject of the blockade of Elsineur by Sir James Saumarez, and stating some circumstances as to the seizure of four American seamen in the Viola, he received an imperfect answer only on the 6th of December, which noticed the letter so far as it related to the blockade, but said nothing at all on the subject of the impressment. That the latter subject was one of the greatest delicacy; and although the seamen had afterwards been released by a judgment of Sir William Scott, yet the secretary of state had considered the original complaint as unworthy of his notice. Such had been the conciliatory spirit of the noble secretary, who permitted the sentence of a court of justice to answer the communication of a foreign minister, whom he himself would not take the trouble of satisfying on so interesting a point. Although Mr Pinckney had on numerous occasions addressed the British minister on the subject of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, he had never received any satisfactory answer, and he accordingly demanded his audience of leave.—Little appeared to have been afterwards done towards effecting the important objects which both governments professed to have so much at heart. Mr Foster had been sent out with no new instructions; he went to offer what had been previously rejected, and to restate what had often before been stated in vain, so that his mission was only productive of disappointment—That it was of the utmost importance to conciliate America; that this object might at one time have been thought unattainable, but from some measures recently adopted by congress for admitting English manufactures into the ports of the United States, there was reason to believe that it was still the wish of the Americans to avoid a rupture—That the prosperity of America contributed much to the welfare of this country, and that America had committed no fault, except that as she was placed in an extraordinary situation, as the only neutral in the world, she had endeavoured to avail herself of her advantages—That the intelligence which had so recently been received from America, made it more important than ever thoroughly to consider this subject; that the bill spoken of as likely to pass through congress would give umbrage to France; and it was the duty of the English government to endeavour, by conciliation, to avail itself of any difference of this kind that might arise.

The members who opposed the motion, censured Mr Whitbread and his friends for the hasty decision which they had ventured to pronounce on the conduct of Great Britain towards America, and upon the policy of the

orders in council; They maintained that England, instead of having acted unjustly towards America, had the strongest case against that power that one nation ever had against another; That no benefit could result from a premature agitation in the House of Commons of the differences betwixt the two countries, but, on the contrary, the greatest inconvenience and mischief might thus be produced. Government had uniformly expressed but one sentiment with regard to the disputes with America, and was sincerely desirous that a war with that country might be avoided, if that could be done without injury to the maritime rights of Great Britain, which never could be yielded to the pretensions of France—That the prosperity of America is not so essential to Great Britain as many persons imagine; that all the predilections of America closely united her to France, and partly from the influence of these feelings, partly from more sordid motives, she insisted that England should allow her to take up the whole carrying trade, nay, even the whole coasting trade of her enemies—That it was for America to decide the question of peace or war; she had adopted a new system, and made new and unheard-of pretensions, to which she knew well that England would never concede; That by moving for papers, it must be intended to create a discussion on them when granted; yet any parliamentary discussion which could take place on the subject, must necessarily increase the irritation on both sides—That the spirit of conciliation always professed in the diplomatic correspondence between the two countries had been most sincere on our side; but the British government would never abandon these maritime rights, which the country had so long maintained, and which are necessary to her greatness—That the Marquis Wellesley had acted wisely in declining to go into details, as to the principles of the blockade which we were called on to abandon; That the first letter of Mr Pinckney alluded to in the debate, had been written for the purpose merely of asking Lord Wellesley some questions on this point; that the British government was determined not to confound with the discussion on the orders in council this question of blockade; and that it was absurd to suppose that England should be ready to declare to France how much of her rights she would surrender, in order to purchase for the Americans a revocation of the obnoxious edicts of Buonaparte. As to the letter of Mr Pinckney on the subject of the recal of Mr Jackson, which was said not to have been answered by Lord Wellesley, the American minister himself had, in his correspondence with his own government, stated that he had had communications with Lord Wellesley on the subject, and repeated opportunities of personal intercourse; and that he had been informed by his lordship, and had no doubt of the fact, that a minister would be sent out to America without delay. If the letter had not been formally answered therefore, the omission was fully explained; and the information desired by Mr Pinckney had been communicated to him in another manner. The ostensible reason of Mr Pinckney for demanding his passport was, that no minister had been sent out to America; yet he had been previously informed, that the delay in sending out a minister had arisen from the situation in which the government found itself for the two months preceding, in consequence of his majesty's illness—That the orders in council did not originate with the present government, the system having been acted upon by those who now

complained so loudly of it; that no one could dispute the justice of these orders who was not prepared to deny our right of retaliating upon the enemy his own excesses; and that those who attributed the commercial distress of the country to the orders in council, had forgotten that the "continental system" was of itself quite sufficient to account for the distress which had occurred.—That the late repeal by France of her decrees was a mere pretence, since the principle of the system was still preserved in vigour, for in a letter lately written by Tureau, the French minister, to the American government, he declared, "That it is to be clearly understood, that France would not consent to alter that system of exclusion adopted by all Europe against the commerce of Great Britain, the wisdom and policy of which system is already developed in its effects against the common enemy; that neutrality was disregarded in every state over which France had any influence." Had France not said to each state in succession, "I must take away your independence in order to injure England?" and could it be doubted that Great Britain was thus entitled to call on neutral nations to assert and maintain their rights?—That the correspondence betwixt this country and America was not finally closed; and while a hope remained, how faint soever, it should be cherished, and nothing should be done which might increase irritation.—The motion of Mr Whitbread was negatived by a very great majority.

The correspondence betwixt the British envoy in America and the government of the United States, was in the meantime continued. Numerous misstatements, intended to widen the breach betwixt the countries, were circulated with industry in America, and were even alluded to in the speeches of some members of congress. Great Britain was said to have demanded, that the United States should pass a law for the introduction of British goods into American ports, and for compelling France to receive British manufactures. Mr Foster, in a letter to Mr Munro, positively denied this statement; and yet, in the answer to this letter, which was not sent for upwards of a month afterwards, the American minister still thought proper to talk of "the novel and extraordinary claim of Great Britain to trade in British articles with her enemy." This was a wilful and gross misrepresentation; and was coupled with the extraordinary demand, so often repeated by the government of America, that England should believe the vague declarations of France as to the repeal of her decrees, even when she continued to prove by her acts that these decrees had not been truly rescinded.—The American secretary complained that ships' papers of the United States were counterfeited in England.—Mr Foster again complained, with great justice, of the partiality of the Americans towards France, in permitting French ships of war to enter and sail from their ports, and to bring back and sell prizes taken from the British merchants; yet to this well-founded complaint Mr Munro made no reply.—Such was the manner in which this negociation was conducted by the American government, which Mr Whitbread praised so much for its candour and magnanimity.

When Mr Whitbread made his motion for the production of the correspondence betwixt the governments, a desire was manifested by some members, to blend that question with the subject of the orders in council, and thus to obtain a decision against these measures, without a fair and deliberate discussion. The day arrived when this famous subject was to be taken into consideration. The Marquis of Lansdowne in the House of

Lords, and Mr Brougham in the House of Commons, brought forward motions in precisely the same terms for the appointment of a committee, to consider the state of the commerce and manufactures of the country, particularly with reference to the effect of the orders in council and the licence trade. As the question was intimately connected with the subject of American politics, it shall here be fully considered.

In support of the motions, it was maintained, that the commercial distress of the country had become so great, and the clamour of the manufacturers so loud and general, that it was incumbent on the legislature to enquire into the existence of the evil, and the means of providing a remedy; that all classes of persons were interested in the prosecution of this enquiry; that even those who conscientiously differed in opinion from the movers as to the origin and extent of the present calamities, must wish to see their sentiments defended and established; that those who approved of the system of 1806, must wish to discover how far it had been supported by that of 1807; that those who did not entirely disapprove of the new system at first, but were surprised by its unexpected result, must be anxious to ascertain clearly and distinctly whether there were sufficient grounds for a change of their opinions; that others who still thought highly of the general policy, might entertain some doubt as to the expediency of the mode in which it had been pursued, and others again who reprobated the new system from its commencement, and who were prepared to shew, that their predictions had been verified, must earnestly desire an opportunity of exposing the folly of government, and averting the ruin with which the country was threatened.—That even if the evils of which the people complained were irremediable, they would be prepared to bear them with greater firmness, after an impartial and accurate investigation had been entered into.—That the orders in council had been from the beginning described as of a retaliatory nature, and it was therefore of importance to understand what that system was, on which it was pretended to retaliate.—That the policy of France might be distinctly traced to one of the first principles of her government—the principle of destroying the commerce of its enemy, although its own trade should become the necessary sacrifice; that the whole measures of Buonaparte had been directed to this object; that the inhabitants of Bourdeaux and other mercantile towns had represented their distress to the government, but their representations were answered by the remark, that it was now too late to talk of trade, that France was a country of arms, and its government wished to see among the people none but soldiers and peasants. The French government had even endeavoured to avail itself of theory to support its proceedings; and a book had lately been published by Talleyrand, in which he laboured to shew that the exclusive encouragement of agriculture was the true and natural policy of France, since the stormy period of the Revolution. In such circumstances, the true policy of England required, that she should have supported and encouraged her own commerce, and fostered neutrality wherever it was to be found; but she had hazarded both, by an attempt to inflict on the enemy injuries which he did not feel, and to retort upon him his injustice rather than consult her own interests. Was it not her duty to have protected a people, separated from her enemy by an ocean to him impassable,—a people having a common origin and speaking a common

language with ourselves; the only nation on earth, except Great Britain, free from the dominion of Buonaparte?—That next to the calamity of war betwixt Great Britain and America, the greatest that could happen to British commerce, would be a war between America and France, which would powerfully second the designs of the enemy, by excluding British commerce from every port of the continent. That our policy, however, had breathed nothing but hostility to neutrals, and the whole series of our measures spoke but one language,—that they must take part either with the one belligerent or the other.—That since the issuing of the British edicts, the trade of the country had declined; that from the returns for the year 180[illegible], the amount of exports and imports would appear to have fallen short of that of the preceding year by fifteen millions, viz. ten millions of exports to the continent, and five millions to America.—That in April council had been asure modified or rescind-; the only orders now in force were then issued, which, in place of the former sweeping principle, substituted a blockade of limited extent, including Holland, the coast of Germany as far north as the Ems, and that portion of Italy which lies between Pesaro and Orbitello. That the original system had thus been abandoned, and the project of retaliation had been altogether laid aside. That the French government had then resorted to measures of still greater severity; and instead of discovering any embarrassment on account of the policy pursued by Great Britain, had carried the anticommercial system to the greatest extremity.—That the enormous increase of bankruptcies, and the distressed state of our commercial and manufacturing towns, afforded a melancholy proof of the evils of our present commercial measures; in the town of Liverpool alone, the poor had in the space of four weeks increased to more than four times their former number. That these proofs of distress could not be met by a reference to the custom-house books, whatever accounts these might give of the exports and imports of the country; in reply to such fallacious statements, we had only to turn our eyes to jails filled with debtors, poor-houses crowded with mendicants, and above all, to the state of many populous counties, where so great was the distress, that the people were driven to insurrection. That even the accounts of the custom-house, however, did not conceal the melancholy fact of the decrease of the commerce of the country; that in the year 1811, there had been a great falling off in exports, compared with the year 1810, and even compared with the year 1809, which had been one of great adversity; nay, although it was universally acknowledged, that the year 1808 had been the most unpropitious ever known in the country, yet the value of the exports of 1811 had sunk below even that of the exports in that unfavourable year.—That the custom-house books, however, were entitled to very little regard; and as an instance of this, it was mentioned, that although they exhibited an increase of exports during the year 1809, compared with the year 1807, to no less an amount than twenty millions, yet it was soon discovered that this enlarged exportation had gone to markets where there was no demand, and the greater part of the goods exported had the next year been returned to this country, and occasioned a proportional addition to the value of the imports. Such evidence, therefore, could be of no authority to disprove the existence of the distress with which the country had been visited.—That out of the unprecedented

state of commercial affairs, the licence system, a system fraught with every evil, had originated; in 1807, the number of licences granted did not exceed 1,600, but in 1810, amounted to upwards of 18,000. That by these licences, all that remained of the principle of the orders in council had been at once given up to the enemy; and we were thus carrying on a trade which was open to him but shut to all neutrals, excepting those who chose to partake of the licence system. That nothing could be more impolitic than thus to encourage the trade of France and her dependencies at the expence of neutral powers, since those who received these licences did not comply with the regulations laid down by England, but secretly carried on just such a trade as the enemy desired,—an evil which there was no way of preventing, except by covering the whole of the enemy's coast with British ships, and thus establishing a real and not a nominal blockade.—That the consequence of all this had been a prodigious increase of foreign shipping in British ports, and the establishment of an extensive nursery of seamen for the fleets of the enemy. That the effect of the licence system in our own country had been no less alarming; that British trade had fallen entirely under the controul of the executive government.—But this was not the only danger; there were abuses connected with granting licences, which spoke powerfully in favour of the present enquiry. That great errors had frequently been committed in the issuing of them; that some persons had opportunities of information which were denied to others, and that the communications which it had become necessary for the Board of Trade to hold with merchants, were calculated to divulge secrets which might be turned to the most unfair purposes. That the evil might extend still farther; and that under the new system, the enemy had the means of knowing at all times what articles this country might wish to have exported, and what it might wish to have imported from the continent; it must be his own fault, therefore, if he did not reduce British commerce completely under his own controul. But the worst evil of the system was, that which it produced on the morals of the trading part of the community, who are tempted into speculations, which begin by forgery, are continued by perjury, and end in enormous fraud. That the terms of the licences were disgraceful to the government which issued them; that the licences, besides the regular papers of the ships, allowed the captain to take on board another set of papers, which were forged from beginning to end; and all these forgeries were confirmed by the solemn oaths of the captain and crew, when they arrived at their destined port. In proof of all this, a letter of a curious description was referred to, written by a person who had made the forgery of ship papers a regular profession. It was in the following terms;—"Gentlemen, we take the liberty herewith to inform you, that we have established ourselves in this town (Liverpool) for the sole purpose of making simulated papers, which we are enabled to do in a way which will give ample satisfaction to our employers, not only being in possession of the original documents of the ship's papers and clearances from various ports, a list of which we annex, but Mr G. B. having worked with his brother, Mr J. B. in the same line for the last two years, and understanding all the necessary languages. Of any changes that may occur in different places on the continent, in the various custom-houses and other offices, and which may render a change of signature ne-

cessary, we are careful to have the earliest information, not only from our own connections, but from Mr J. B. who has proffered his assistance in every thing, and who has for some time made simulated papers for Messrs B. and P. of this town, to whom we beg leave to refer you for farther information. We remain, &c."—Such were miserable and disgraceful expe- nts to which the new system had reduced the British merchants It was no answer to say, that if these crimes had not been committed by us, they would have been perpetrated by others; let them be committed by the whole world besides, but let it no longer be said, that England, whose merchants in former and happier times were held in universal estimation for probity and honour, had sunk to this depth of shame and degradation.

Among other arguments of a less direct nature against the orders in council, it was said that the manufac- gland had more he manufactures of Massachusets, than from all the manufactures of the French empire; and if it were the object of ministers to prevent the growth of French commerce, the hazard of increasing by the orders in council the manufactures of America should not be overlooked. The Americans had the advantage of possessing the raw material; and they had begun already to export the first articles of manufacture which they had never done before.—That America, with all her advantages, would soon be able to supply the southern parts of her great continent with manufactures, as the communication would be easy, and her commercial restraints would hardly be felt.—That the effect of the orders in council on the state of France had been very insignificant; that the French revenue of customs might have been somewhat diminished, but as the customs always formed a small part of the revenue of France, any diminution in this respect had probably been compensated by confiscations.—That there was nothing derogatory to the national honour in an attempt to conciliate America; that the Americans had not urged their claims with haughtiness or violence; they believed that France had effectually repealed her decrees, and they naturally expected the immediate repeal of the orders in council.—It had been said that the denationalizing system, to use the jargon of the French government, had not yet been abandoned by Buonaparte; but although, on the principle of this absurd system, some captures had been made, no instance of confiscation had occurred since the alledged revocation of the decrees.—That America, from common courtesy to the French government, was bound to believe its declarations; and of course she could not hesitate to admit what the government of France had solemnly asserted, that her decrees had in truth been repealed.—That a groundless clamour had been raised for the safety of our maritime rights; but in truth those rights, in their fair and liberal interpretation, had not been questioned by America. —And, finally, that it was strange to hear the advocates of the orders in council oppose enquiry; since, if the orders had been really beneficial to the country, they, of all others, had no reason to dread the proposed investigation.

In answer to these arguments, it was stated, that the commercial distresses were not general; that they had not been produced by the orders in council, and that the papers on the table, so far from supporting, directly contradicted, such an assertion. That the view which had been taken of the state of commerce was very erroneous; that in the year 1807, the year in which the

orders in council had been first enforced, the value of the exports amounted to about thirty four millions and a half; in 1808 it amounted to about the same sum; in 1809 it increased to upwards of fifty millions; and in 1810 sunk to about forty-six millions, which still left a great increase since 1807, when the orders were first issued.—The reports which had been circulated by the supporters of the motion as to the millions of British property confiscated by Buonaparte, were quite absurd and groundless; and even if they were true, had not the least connection with the subject of the orders in council.—That the non-intercourse law, and the other measures adopted by America, had opened to this country a direct trade with the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and had thus been of essential service to the commerce of Great Britain.—That a fair account of the exports to America and the West Indies in different years, from 1807 downwards, would dissipate the delusion which some persons had attempted to impose on the country; that in 1807 these exports amounted to nearly fifteen millions; in 1808, notwithstanding the partial prohibition of importation into the United States, to nearly sixteen millions; in 1809, when the American non-intercourse act was carried into effect, to upwards of nineteen millions; and in 1810, while the same act was still in operation, the exports to America and the West Indies rose to about twenty millions and a half in value. It thus appeared, that in the intervening years betwixt 1807 and 1810, an increase, to the extent of six millions sterling had taken place in the export trade of this country to the whole of America.—That a foolish attempt had been made to misrepresent the objects which engaged the attention of the Board of Trade, since it was recently entrusted with the power of determining what articles it was safe and proper, in the present circumstances of Europe, to import into Great Britain.—That a most exaggerated account had been given of the injury done to the British shipping by the orders in council, which could easily be disproved by a reference to facts. In 1807 the British shipping actually employed was 1,436,000 tons; in 180 , 1,311,000; in 1809, 1,539,008; and in 1810, 1,609,(tons; so that an increase in British shipping had taken place, since the operation of the orders in council, to a very great extent. The number of seamen had also increased from 88,000 to 102,000; and although it was true that foreign shipping had also increased, yet it must be recollected that this foreign shipping, in the circumstances of the world, had contributed to the prosperity of British commerce.—To those who complained, that a partiality had been indicated to the foreign shipping of the continent, over that of America, it was answered, that no distinction had been made by Great Britain; and it had been the fault of the Americans themselves if they had not participated in the trade lately carried on.—That a great advantage accrued to England from an immediate intercourse with the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in South America; that the advantages of commerce, and the objects of the navigation act, were thus equally promoted. Had the order in council never been issued, France would have enjoyed the full benefit of a trade with the whole world; she would have been enabled to supply herself with the raw materials of her manufactures, an object to which she evidently directed her most anxious efforts.—What was the real origin of the orders in council? France declared that there should be no trade to England; the answer of England was, and she had the power of enforcing her mandate, that nothing should be ex-

ported from France but by her permission. She had a right to announce to neutral powers, that if they tolerated the regulations of one belligerent, inimical to all commercial interests, they must submit to regulations on her part, in defence of these interests.—That the cabinet of England had been friendly towards America, while that of France had been hostile in the extreme. France had on all occasions seized and destroyed the property of American citizens.—That many proofs of the insincerity of the French government in the revocation of its decrees had lately appeared, even in the proceedings of the Admiralty courts of England.—That in France, the distinction between sequestration and condemnation, which had been ignorantly taken by some speakers, was merely nominal and the existence of sequestrations, to a large amount, could not be denied.—That the perjury and immorality which had been so learnedly descanted on, had existed long before the orders in council and licence trade were known. That a house had been established at Embden, which, for frauds of that kind, had received a regular commission of 2 per cent.; and were the orders in council and the licence system abolished, the country must return to the old practices of neutralization, which could not exist but by perjury.—Many arts had been used to make the people believe that their distresses proceeded from the orders in council; yet the gloomy pictures which had been drawn of the state of the country were either very extravagant or entirely fanciful. The arguments which had been built on the assumption, that the goods exported in 1809 had not found a market, rested on a gross mistake in point of fact: these goods had, in the first instance, found a ready market, which continued open until the month of March, 1810.—It was idle to talk of the repeal of the French decrees, since it had been declared by the French government, that no repeal could take place until England should abandon her right of blockade,—a requisition in which America concurred, as she required of Great Britain to repeal so much of the regulations of 1807 as might leave the trade of America perfectly unimpeded. What would be the consequence of repealing the orders in council, and giving up the licence trade?—to open to France and America the trade of the whole world. America would then carry the manufactures and colonial produce of France to the different ports of Europe; while England would be excluded from a participation in a commerce which she would thus permit to her enemies.—That the measures of Buonaparte, although they had in some degree affected this country, had also inflicted a severe blow on his own commerce and resources; that the revenue of France had suffered greatly since the issuing of the orders in council; and that her trade had experienced a very serious diminution appeared from her money transactions, and the state of the affairs of her national bank.—With reference to the measure immediately before the house, it was said that the appointment of a committee could serve no good purpose, unless it were intended that the committee, by interfering with the affairs of America, should controul the deliberations of the cabinet; a proposal which was not likely to find support in the House of Commons. If such a committee were appointed, gentlemen of different interests must be examined; some deeply connected with the American trade, and naturally entertaining certain prejudices in its favour; others connected with the trade to the continent of Europe, and full of prejudices of an opposite nature; and how, in such circumstances, could the committee extract the truth from them?

It was a mean and despicable thing, at all events, to proclaim to the world, that a question of such great national importance was to be decided on the narrow and sordid principle of profit and loss.—That the great prosperity of British trade in 1809 and 1810 had, by encouraging a spirit of wild speculation, occasioned much of the late distress; but was the House, by appointing a committee, to confirm a prejudice of the manufacturers, artfully raised from bad motives, that all their distresses were imputable to the impolicy of their own government, not to the barbarous system of the enemy, who had violated all the laws of civilized nations?—That the question as to the licence trade was totally unconnected with the orders in council; that British property could find admission into the continent only under the cover of neutrality; and there is no maxim more obvious, than that trade cannot be carried on betwixt enemies except by licence; a rule which is intended to prevent unlawful and treasonable intercourse. That no plan could, in the circumstances of Europe, have been devised for carrying on the trade of England with the continent in a manner altogether pure and irreproachable; but it betrayed a vile hypocrisy to assert, that trade ought to be wholly abandoned on account of the excusable frauds necessarily practised in conducting it.—That the object of the licence system was merely to protect vessels from British seizures and condemnations; for it was by other means that they calculated on evading the provisions of the continental system, and introducing their produce into the French territories.—Even if the orders in council had been repealed, and the Americans allowed, without molestation, to carry the sugars of Cuba into France, and the manufactures of Germany into South America, while the British trade was controuled by the French decrees, there would still have been (as was said with regard to the existing system) "forgery in the origin, and perjury and fraud in the conclusion of the transactions."—It was absurd to suppose that Buonaparte was an enemy to all commerce; he was a decided enemy, indeed, to British commerce, but to his own trade he appeared to have its interests very much at heart. That America had joined with him in requiring not only the repeal of the orders in council, but the abandonment of the British system of blockade; and it was childish therefore to imagine that the repeal of the orders in council would be sufficient to conciliate her.—The principle of these orders was described by Mr Canning, as being strictly retaliatory. It had been thought expedient indeed to qualify the principle by a restriction, which amounted only to a mitigation in favour of neutrals; a mitigation that showed the desire of the British government to confine the evil to the enemy. Where the principle of retaliation was strictly adhered to, the injury to the neutral was merely incidental, and wholly unavoidable; the injury was matter of regret, but the measures from which it resulted had been forced on the British government.—Those who objected to the principle of retaliation in warlike measures, forgot that there is in fact no other method of enforcing obedience to the law of nations, but by the operation of this principle. If a considerable state presume to set all laws at defiance,—to contemn every principle hitherto regarded as sacred, and to carry on war in violation of every maxim of the law of nations, how can its mad career be arrested but by recurrence to measures of retaliation? It had been said, that if England did retaliate, she ought to have done so in the mode and form in which the enemy had injured her; yet

nothing could be more extravagant. If the enemy chose to violate the law of nations, in a case in which he had nothing to lose, while we had every thing at stake, could it be seriously pretended that we were bound to retaliate, not where we could make him feel the consequences of his folly, but where we could do him no possible injury?—The object of the orders in council was not to destroy the trade of the continent, but to compel the continent to trade with England, and with England alone.—That must have been an absurd species of reasoning which attributed the recent difficulties of trade to these orders, when it was incontestably proved, that for two or three years after they were issued, an effect directly opposite had resulted, and when the embarrassments of commerce had been so clearly traced to other causes.—In answer to those who complained of the immorality of the licence system, as displayed in the form of the licences themselves, it was remarked, that the very clause which bad been censured with so much severity, had been drawn up by a former administration, and found by the present ministers in their offices, prepared and digested by the very persons who now affected to be so much scandalised by the discovery.—That the real question upon this branch of the subject was, if trade cannot be carried on with certain countries except by means of licences, are the objections to that system so formidable that the trade must be abandoned rather than have recourse to it?—It was a foolish notion to suppose that the orders in council had no effect on the trade of France, the diminished produce of the French customs contradicted such an opinion; and in an address of the senate to Buonaparte, it was acknowledged that the French no longer had any trade, except what was carried on by means of canals; while it was admitted, without hesitation, that they laboured in all respects under the most unexampled difficulties.—That on no principle was Great Britain bound to suffer France to give laws to neutral powers, without making an effort to induce them to assert their rights. The grand object of the orders in council had been not only to inflict retaliation on France, but to induce America to disengage herself from a connection in which she had unhappily been involved, and to resume her consequence and independence among the nations of the world. Such is the substance of these famous discussions in both houses of parliament; and the result was, that the motions of the Marquis of Lansdowne and Mr Brougham were negatived by a very great majority.

CHAP. X.

American Affairs continued. Declaration of the British Government relating to the disputed Points of Maritime Law. Secret Mission of Captain Henry to the United States. Renewed Discussion on the Orders in Council. The British Government rescind them with respect to America. America still dissatisfied. Declares War against England. Capture of the Guerriere and Macedonian Frigates. Destruction of the Armies of Generals Hull and Wadsworth.

THE frequent acts of plunder and confiscation committed by the French, seemed for a time to have some effect on the councils of the United States, and to have encouraged a pacific disposition towards Great Britain, which was, perhaps, not a little strengthened by the disclosures so recently made as to the state of the American finances. Yet the proposals submitted to the British government were perhaps not very sincere, but intended merely for the purpose of gaining time. An offer was made by America to establish, under some important modifications, the treaty which was signed by the plenipotentiaries of the two governments in the year 1806, but which Mr Jefferson refused at that time to ratify. The American government must have known, however, that England could not, without surrendering all her pretensions, accede to such a proposition. In the mean time the Americans were making preparations for war; a loan of eleven millions of dollars was proposed for the service of the year; the interest upon which was to be paid by an increase of the duties on importation. The loans for 1813 and 1814 were at the same time estimated at eighteen millions each year; and although a vigorous opposition was made to a measure which threatened to subject the citizens of the United States to a severe system of taxation which they were unable to bear, the bill at last received the sanction of the legislature.

A bill of a most extraordinary nature was about the same time introduced, which provided that any foreigner guilty of impressing American citizens on board a foreign ship, should, when arrested, be tried, and, if convicted, suffer death as a pirate. The object of this, as well as of the other measures adopted at this period, could not be mistaken; and the general hostility towards England seemed to increase in spite of the vain attempts at negociation, which the American government still continued to pursue.

An event occurred about this time which imperiously demanded of the British government, a distinct avowal of its principles in the new state of

commercial warfare in which the world had been involved. On the 10th of March the French minister for foreign affairs presented to the conservative senate an official report, by which all doubt as to the perseverance of the French ruler in the assertion of his extravagant principles was removed. The British government immediately issued a declaration, in which it was stated, that the novel and extraordinary principles to which the French government had recourse, had called for measures of retaliation on the part of England; that the king had always been desirous to exercise his undoubted right with as little injury as possible to the commerce of neutrals, and had at all times professed his readiness to revoke the orders in council, so soon as the decrees of the enemy were fairly repealed, and the commerce of neutral nations restored to its accustomed course.—That the state of Europe in the year 1809 had enabled his majesty to reduce these beneficent views to practice, and to confine the retaliatory measures to France, and the countries on which the French yoke had been most strictly imposed; and his majesty had readily availed himself of so favourable an opportunity for abridging the miseries of war.—That the government of the United States had still remained dissatisfied.—It had been pretended that the French decrees were revoked, although ample proofs of their execution at a recent period had been brought forward.—That the enemy had now, however, laid aside all dissimulation, and had declared that the ships of every power which refused to acknowledge his principles were, to use the language of his code, denationalized.—That in addition to the disavowal of the blockade of 1806, and the repeal of the orders in council, he demanded the admission of the principle, that free ships should make free goods; that neutral property in the hands of enemies should be treated as hostile; that arms and warlike stores alone, to the exclusion of ship timber, and other articles of naval equipment, should be regarded as contraband of war; and that no ports should be considered as lawfully blockaded, except such as were invested and besieged, in the presumption of their being taken, and into which no merchant ship could enter with safety.

The enemy thus demanded that the established law of nations should be overthrown, that Great Britain should forego the advantages of her naval superiority, and that her commerce should be excluded from every country of the world, to which the influence of France might extend.—That, acting on this principle, the enemy did not hesitate to incorporate with his own dominions all states which refused to sacrifice their national honour at his command.—That the provisions of the treaty of Utrecht, which were founded on a voluntary compact, were referred to as evidence of principles which were to be established by force; and that France had thus departed from the very conditions on which the pretended repeal of her decrees had been accepted by America.—That it had, therefore, become the duty of America to relax the measures of severity, which, by misconception she had adopted towards Great Britain; and as a proof of the desire of the British government to fulfil its engagements, it was declared that so soon as the Berlin and Milan decrees should be actually and unconditionally revoked, the British orders in council should be considered, without any farther declaration, as at an end; reserving at the same time to the king the most ample powers to re-establish any measures of this kind, should it after-

wards appear that the repeal by the enemy had been illusory.

Such was the just and magnanimous declaration issued by the British government. In England, however, it was considered by the enemies of the orders in council as a reply to the petitions before parliament, complaining of the distresses occasioned by these orders; and it was no sooner issued, than Lord Stanley brought forward a motion in the House of Commons, for referring these petitions to the consideration of a committee of the whole House.—There was not much novelty in the arguments by which this motion was supported. With reference to the terms of the declaration, it was asserted that the measures of the French government were neither new nor extraordinary; but had in principle been adopted, although executed with less rigour by England in the years 1739 and 1756; and were precisely such in fact as all independent states had a right to pursue.—That the measures of the French government had proved wholly impotent, till they were supported by the retaliatory system to which England had recourse.—That the petitions on the table concurred in attributing the distresses of the country to the orders in council; yet the declaration lately issued had announced the resolution of government to abide by its principles, without regard to the general misery which appeared in every district of the country.—That this resolution reduced the measures of the British government, and the prosperity of British commerce, to a dependence on the will of the enemy; and that although it had become impossible to obtain employment for the lower orders, and the price of provisions was rapidly advancing, there seemed to be no prospect of redress.—In answer to these speculations, it was stated by Mr Rose, who on all occasions discovered a very accurate knowledge of this subject, that by the Berlin decree, if British goods were found on board of an American ship trading between America and China, they must be forfeited; and that it was, therefore, absurd to talk of the decree as a mere municipal regulation. He observed also, that although the Berlin decree had been in a great measure inoperative until the peace of Tilsit, because the enemy had not till that period the means of enforcing it, yet immediately afterwards the French had marched their troops into all parts of the continent, for the purpose of carrying their system into effect, and the consequences had been immediately felt in the extreme depression of the commerce of this country.—Among the evils which would result from the repeal of the orders in council in the existing state of Europe, Mr Rose mentioned, that as the ports of France would then be opened to American commerce, the enemy would easily be supplied with the raw materials, and would be enabled to manufacture them, and to compete with England directly in the markets of South America, and in every other place to which her precarious trade might extend.—That the falling off in the direct trade of this country to America had been, in a great measure, compensated by the increase of our exports to other countries, to which the same commodities had formerly been carried in American ships.—A curious fact was also stated by this gentleman respecting the trade of America. Of her exports, amounting annually in value to forty-five millions of dollars, thirty-eight went to England and her allies, and only two millions to France and her dependencies, whose friendship the government of America seemed so anxious to cultivate.—But there was no necessity for a protracted debate; the distresses of the country were unques-

tionably great; the people seemed to look to the repeal of the orders in council as a source of relief; and in such circumstances the ministers did not think of resisting enquiry, but gave their consent to the motion for appointing a committee.

A circumstance of an extraordinary nature was about this time communicated by a message from the president of the United States to congress.—The message stated, that while the United States were at peace with Great Britain, a secret agent of the British government had been employed in certain states, more especially at the seat of government at Massachusets, in fomenting disaffection to the constituted authorities of the country, for the purpose of seducing the southern parts of the Union into a political connection with Great Britain.—The message was accompanied with various documents. The secret agent alluded to was a person of the name of Henry, who pretended to the American government, that he had been employed for the purposes stated in the message, and had been induced to make the discovery, by the refusal of the British government to give him his reward.—The documents referred to had been transmitted in a letter from Henry to Mr Munro, the American secretary of state; and in this letter Henry confessed his strong feelings of disappointment and of revenge towards those who had employed him.—The first of the documents produced with the message was a letter from Sir James Craig's secretary to Henry, dated at Quebec in January, 1809, and desiring to know, whether he would undertake a secret and confidential mission to Boston. The second, which was dated February in the same year, contained Sir James Craig's instructions to Henry, in which the latter is desired to form an acquaintance with some of the leading federalists of the southern states, to ascertain their opinions as to the policy of a separation from the Union, and their disposition to avail themselves of the assistance of the British government. In a memorial to Lord Liverpool, which was found among the papers, Henry took credit to himself for the services which he had performed, by influencing the public acts and legislative resolutions of the assemblies of Massachusets and Connecticut, by means of which the general government was kept in check, and its hostility towards Great Britain considerably moderated. The memorial was inclosed in a letter addressed to Mr Peele, and claimed a handsome reward from government.—Another of the documents purported to be a letter from Mr Peele, written by desire of Lord Liverpool, in which it was stated, that as the opinion of Sir James Craig respecting the merits and services of Henry had not been received, and as no wish had been expressed by Sir James that the claim should be referred to this country, it had been determined to transmit Henry's memorial to Sir James Craig's successor in the government of North America. The other branches of the correspondence were of little or no importance.

The above intelligence no sooner reached England, than a motion was made in the House of Lords by Lord Holland, for copies of the whole correspondence relating to the pretended employment of Henry.—The grounds of this motion, said its supporters, were obvious; a serious charge affecting the honour of the country had been made by the American government, and it was proper to have it investigated. The British ministers had been charged not merely with employing Henry to obtain intelligence on subjects which might be lawfully enquired into, but to induce some of the states of

the Union to cast off their allegiance to their lawful government. What would have been the public feeling in England, it was asked, or the conduct of the government, if, while Andreossi was here during the peace of Amiens, he had been detected carrying on a secret intercourse with the malcontents of Ireland; who would have hesitated, if such an event had occurred, to have advised war, unless a satisfactory explanation had been immediately offered? and what bounds should we have set to our resentment against those who had dared to insult the honour, and to intrigue against the peace, of the country? It could afford no defence for the conduct of Sir James Craig, or of the government, (if, indeed, the government had been accessary to these proceedings) that the Americans had been making preparations to invade Canada; for although such a state of things warranted Sir James in taking all proper measures for defence, and even in doing every thing to secure the most correct information, yet it by no means entitled him to attempt the seduction of the American people from their allegiance.

The answer made by Lord Liverpool formed a complete vindication of the ministry from the charges which had been so indecently preferred against them by the American government. His lordship stated, that the employment of Henry by Sir James Craig had not been authorised by the government; nor was it even known at home that such a person had been employed, till many months after the transactions were concluded. It was necessary, however, to attend to the situation in which Canada was at that time placed with respect to the government of the United States. In consequence of the embargo act, great heat and clamour prevailed in America at the time; that country assumed a very warlike and menacing attitude; not only were defensive measures adopted, but the 25th of November the governor of Boston received orders to hold 10,000 men in readiness to march at a moment's notice; a circumstance which was quite notorious, and often mentioned in the public prints. This army could have but one object—the invasion of Canada; and such accordingly was the impression on the mind of Sir James Craig, which many other circumstances, and particularly the sudden enrolment of 50,000 volunteers by the government of the United States, tended to confirm. Mr Erskine, the minister then resident in America, had also entertained the same suspicions; and had sent an express to Sir James Craig, informing him that Canada or Halifax was to be immediately attacked. Such were the circumstances in which Sir James was placed, at a moment too when the separation of some of the states, in the event of a war, had become the subject of general speculation. Sir James had already received communications from Henry, a person who professed to be well acquainted with the sentiments of the people of the southern states; and whatever falsehoods and exaggerations might have been industriously propagated, the object of the governor of Canada in sending Henry into the United States was not to excite discontent, but to obtain information, which, in the event of hostilities, might have enabled him to avail himself of the prevalent temper and disposition of the people in these states. As a proof that the instructions of the governor, such as they were, had reference only to a state of hostilities, it was mentioned that no sooner did Sir James Craig hear that the points in discussion had been adjusted, than he sent orders to Henry to return.—Ministers had been most anxious to caution Sir James against the employment of individuals, who might disturb the har-

mony subsisting betwixt Great Britain and America; and the conduct of Lord Liverpool, in recommending Henry for a reward, had been influenced entirely by a wish to make him a fair remuneration for his services, without intimating any opinion as to the policy of the mission which had been entrusted to him.—It was agreed by all parties that the conduct of the American ruler, who, without requiring explanation, or giving any notice to the British ministers, had at once laid the papers before congress, was in the highest degree indelicate and unbecoming; and as there was no reason to suppose that any charge existed against the British government, parliament, it was said, ought to leave the management of this affair to ministers, and to reject a motion which could lead to no discoveries of any importance. The motion was accordingly rejected by a large majority.

The hostile disposition which had already been indicated by the Americans towards this country in so many different ways, began now to discover itself with still greater violence; and it was evident, that, although some degree of fear and hesitation still prevented the immediate declaration of war, this last act of folly had become nearly inevitable. A resolution was proposed to congress to seize all British goods in America, to detain all British subjects, and to issue letters of marque and reprisal against British property in general: and it was expected that these measures of hostility would soon be followed by a still more unequivocal declaration of the resolutions of government. An American general was dispatched to Detroit to take the command of 8000 men, whose destination for the invasion of Canada was no longer concealed. Strong remonstrances were, however, presented by many respectable towns and corporate bodies interested in the preservation of amity with England; and it is probable that this spirit alone repressed for a time the eager desire of Mr Madison and his party to precipitate hostilities.

A circumstance in the meantime occurred, than which nothing could more strongly mark the bad faith of the French government in its transactions with America, and which of itself ought to have changed entirely the line of policy on which the government of the United States had now resolved. A dispatch was received from Paris by the American envoy in London, announcing the formal revocation by the French government of the Milan and Berlin decrees, so far as regarded America; and how much soever the singular perfidy displayed in this transaction may astonish every upright mind, this revocation, although communicated in the year 1812, was dated as far back as April 1811. No doubt could be entertained that this official notification had been extorted from the French government in consequence of the British declaration, that so soon as the French decrees should be repealed the British orders in council should also cease. After having for two years therefore refused any explanation, or official document even to America, Buonaparte came forward in May 1812, with a decree antedated to the 11th of April, 1811; and that decree, even referring to the year 1810, from which period it was said that these notable edicts, in so far as the interests of America were concerned, had been repealed. So gross an insult as this on the good faith and honour of nations was perhaps never offered by any government.

The committee appointed to enquire into the orders in council, after the most anxious and laborious researches, had now closed its investigations; and a motion was made by Mr Brougham

for the repeal of these edicts. The general topics of argument had already been exhausted in a former debate; and it was only the discoveries which had been made in the course of the late tedious enquiry which the House was now called upon to consider. Mr Brougham, however, made an elaborate speech. He began by stating, that the orders in council had always been defended on the supposed necessity of affording relief to the commerce and industry of the country, yet the people had now come to implore parliament to abandon them to the hostility of their enemies, and spare them the merciless kindness under which they were groaning.—That upon the vote of the House the destiny of thousands depended; and if the legislature should say *no* to the petitions against the orders in council, multitudes of hungry men must be let loose upon the country, who would either find food or perish.—That commercial capital had been universally locked up —men of great nominal wealth were living without income—trading, or seeming to trade, without profit—numbers of workmen had been dismissed—those who remained were earning only a half or quarter of their wages—even parish rates were increasing—charitable supplies failing, from the reduced means of the higher classes, and the augmented claims on their bounty.—But the most prominent feature in this case, was the impending necessity of instantaneously disbanding those, who were now detained only in the hopes of a favourable decision of parliament.—That the orders in council had an operation in producing distress, much more enlarged than many persons were willing to believe; that the army in the peninsula was fed from America; that the embargo in that country had raised the price of flour in the Lisbon market above 50 per cent. and had occasioned in one morning an export from London of 6000 barrels to supply the Portugueze market.—That no attempt had been made by the supporters of the orders in council to meet the evidence which so fully established the distresses of the country; that they had contented themselves with a reference to the custom-house books, —a criterion that might be resorted to when better evidence could not be had, but which is always suspicious, and, in the present instance, had been superseded by the most melancholy disclosures.—But even the custom-house books indicated a great and unexampled depression of trade. Nor was there any reason for believing, that for the loss of the trade of the United States compensation had been obtained in other quarters, since the custom-house books themselves exhibited a general falling-off of the whole trade of the country.—That the market of South America, instead of having increased the valuable commerce of the country, had introduced a spirit of speculation, which had brought ruin on all those who had ventured to indulge in it.—That it was a great fallacy to suppose that any considerable proportion of the goods imported from Britain into the United States, was re-exported to South America and the West Indies, since it had been proved by a respectable witness before the committee, that the re-exportation never exceeded one-thirteenth of the whole value, and, of course, that the loss of the trade to North America had not in any way been compensated by the supposed increase in the commerce carried on to the other parts of the world, the trade of which we should at any rate have been able to command.—That the home market had also suffered severely by the glut occasioned in all those articles, which had formerly been destined for exportation, and that even of the home trade, which still remained, the great-

er part depended on the extravagant demands of that great and unprofitable consumer—the government—That the repeal of the orders in council, so far from being injurious to the stability of our maritime rights, and of the naval power which protects them, seemed essential to their preservation; That the paper blockades, as they were called, were contrary to law, and had never been recognized in any of the courts—That, although the orders in council were repealed, and although England were to relinquish for the present, the rights on which they are founded, it would not follow that she could never again enforce them—That at the peace of Utrecht, after a war of unexampled success, and a series of uninterrupted triumphs, in which the power of England was extended and confirmed, and France and her allies humbled to the dust, we gave up for a time the principle, that free ships should not make free goods; and during the American war we relinquished what is called the rule of the war, 1756, yet without ultimately abandoning either of these principles—That every right may be abandoned for the sake of expediency, and resumed when this reason ceases—That the loss which was sustained by the obstinate exercise of this right, in the present instance, was enormous; and that the American market was at stake,—a market which takes off about thirteen millions worth of our manufactures, and in steadiness and regularity is unrivalled—That by refusing to the Americans the market of England to purchase from, we were driving them to supply themselves, and there was no branch of their commerce which had not now, to a certain degree, been improved; many branches of their manufactures had been created since 1807, and all were rapidly springing up to maturity—That the dread of losing a market such as that of America was quite rational, while the fear entertained by the supporters of the orders in council, that the capital, industry, and skill of England might be outdone by France, was altogether contemptible—That there was no danger of any loss of honour by seeking to conciliate America; that England never stood so high as she now did in point of military character; that she had it in abundance, and even to spare; that the events of the war had not merely sustained the ancient fame of the nation, they had done what seemed scarcely possible; they had greatly increased it; they had covered the British arms with immortal renown; and the government was bound to profit by the proud height on which England stood for the purposes of peace and conciliation with America.

The ministers had already come to the determination of making some temporary arrangement on this subject, which might at all events evince their disposition to relieve the distress of the country, whether those who suffered were right or wrong in speculating upon its origin. They did not on this occasion, therefore, enter into any very full discussion of the merits of this great question,—a discussion, which, in the circumstances of the case, would have been superfluous; but before explaining to the House the nature of the arrangement which it was proposed to adopt, Lord Castlereagh defended the principles on which the orders in council had originally been established. He said, "on such an important subject, he felt anxious to offer to the House the reasons which appeared to him conclusive against the address. He lamented the precipitation of the honourable and learned gentleman in bringing forward this motion—a precipitation injurious to his own cause. This was the more to be regretted, as the evidence went to such a great extent. He was sorry

that the honourable and learned gentleman, even for the sake of his own character, should have so much departed from all parliamentary practice, and should have pressed to a hasty discussion a question than which one more vital never came before parliament. He deprecated any interference on the part of the House in a question of great national importance, involving unquestionably commercial considerations of the most serious na- , but mixed up also with considerations of maritime right. It was certainly not out of the absolute province of parliament to interfere on such an occasion; but it had always been extremely averse, pending a negociation on a delicate subject, to dictate to the executive government the course which it ought to pursue. He admitted that the honourable and learned gentleman had made out a grave case of national distress, as affecting the manufacturers of the country. He further admitted, that there was reasonable ground to believe that if the American market was not opened within a limited period, the pressure would be increased. But still he hoped that parliament would not allow their imaginations to wander so widely with the honourable and learned gentleman, as to conceive that the general commerce and manufactures of the empire were in a state of decay and perishment. He by no means wished to under-rate the pressure on those of our manufacturers who had been accustomed to export to America. He felt acutely for their distresses, and he declared that he had never met with more fair and liberal men than the individuals sent by those manufacturers to represent their case to parliament. He conceded to the honourable and learned gentleman, that if Great Britain revoked her orders in council, America might be disposed to abrogate her non-importation act; but he contended, that on a retrospect of the past, he was by no means prepared to say that it would have been wise to have kept possession of the American market, by abstaining from those measures; an abstinence which would have exposed the commerce of this country to all the evils with which it had been threatened by France. In justice, however, Great Britain ought to have retained possession of the American market, notwithstanding the system which she had adopted towards France—a system which he admitted was not justifiable on principles of commercial policy, but which was most completely justifiable on the principle in which it originated; namely, the principle of coercing France, and driving her from the system of misrule which she had so extensively exercised. As directed against France, this system had obtained its object. Never was a country more commercially depressed than France. By the official documents of the French government, it appeared, that the whole extent of the manufactures and produce of that country, with her population of 36,000,000, consumed internally, as well as exported, did not equal the simple exports of other nations. In the year before last, they did not exceed 54,000,000*l.* sterling, while ours amounted to 66,000,000*l.* Never, therefore, would he cease to contend, that the system of his late right honourable friend did originate as much in wisdom as in justice. Even with the loss of the American market, (which he maintained, we ought not to have lost,) let the House compare the situation in which the British empire was with that in which it might have been, but for the orders in council. This country (with the exception of the last year, the deficiency of which was occasioned by temporary causes,) exhibited to the world a spectacle of a nation successfully struggling amidst the efforts of war, and rising in wealth and commer-

cial prosperity. Indeed, a great part of the deficiency of the last year was occasioned by the preceding extraordinary and even unnatural prosperity. With that exception, the commerce of the country, al[illegible] that which related to America, [illegible] increased in an accumulating ratio, b[illegible]nd what it ever had been in times [illegible] peace. And even in continental Europe, our commerce, notwithstanding the efforts of the scourge of the continent, had grown to a considerable extent, particularly since the issuing of the orders in council. The average of our annual exports to the continent during the three years preceding the orders in council was 17,500,000l. The annual average of the three years subsequent to the orders in council, was 23,000,000l. being an increase of near six millions. Even the exports to America, prior to the last year, so far from decaying, had considerably increased. The average of the annual exports to America and the West Indies, during the three years immediately preceding the last year, was 22,000,000l.; the annual average during the three years preceding those three years, was only 19,500,000l. The present distress of those manufacturing districts most connected with America was, in a great degree, attributable to the benevolent feelings of the master manufacturers, who had expended their capitals in keeping their men employed on the same scale during the last year as they had done [illegible] the three years preceding. He [illegible]ways denied, that the present [illegible] was adopted from any unworthy motive of national gain. It rested on the firm ground of national defence. It rested on the principle, that as the enemy wielded his utmost extent of power against the prosperity of the British empire, we had a right to wield the utmost extent of our power against the prosperity of France. He stated it in vindication of the character of the country, and of the government, that he believed no councils had ever been more honourably and faithfully directed to apply the system of retaliation successfully to the enemy, but in a way as little obnoxious as possible to the neutral. Various modifications had been resorted to for this latter purpose, and particularly the order of 1809, limited the blockade to France and the countries immediately under the power of her arms. Adverting to the system of licences, he maintained that the honourable and learned gentleman had fallen under a great error on the subject. The licences connected with the system of blockade did not form a fifth of the whole licence system of the country. We had a right by our licences to avail ourselves of the relief which the enemy required; and we had never done this to the injury of neutrals, who had enjoyed as much facility in sailing from our ports as our own merchant vessels. But it was not with the licence system that America quarrelled. We had expressed our readiness to return, if America wished it, to the strict measure of 1807, provided she rescinded the act prohibitory of our commerce. He was anxious to call the attention of the House to some circumstances which had occurred since the last discussion on the subject, and since the issuing of the regent's declaration in April. It had been asked in that House, in what way he understood the operation of the French decree recently communicated to government by the American minister? He had no hesitation in replying, that in his opinion it by no means satisfied the regent's declaration, which required the unqualified and unconditional repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees, as the condition of rescinding the orders in council. The day on which

he had received that decree, was the very day on which the House of Commons had been pleased by its vote, virtually to dissolve the administration; and therefore it was not until the last three or four days that the present government, considering themselves as a government, had deliberated on the subject. On the face of this instrument, however, he had no difficulty in repeating that it appeared insufficient, and was accompanied with circumstances of great distrust and suspicion. It was difficult also to say, whether this decree had not been completely revoked by the sweeping declaration of the Duke of Bassano, that the Berlin and Milan decrees would remain in full force, until the maritime assumptions of this country should be abandoned. There, therefore, must exist considerable doubts on the subject. Nevertheless, it might not be unwise to put the country in a situation to receive explanations upon it. If the American government should be found disposed to make representations to France, to induce her to satisfy the just expectations contained in his royal highness the Prince Regent's declaration, Great Britain would be disposed to consent to the suspension, for a limited period, of the restrictive system of both countries; or, in other words, she would consent to suspend the orders in council, if America would consent to suspend her non-importation act. The experiment might then be tried of the practicability of restoring things to their ancient system. If, by an act of temper and conciliation, not incompatible with the safety of the country, an inducement could be held out to France, in the paroxysm of her power, to return to that system, a departure from which had been destructive of her own commerce, it would be an act redounding to our honour. Should the event be favourable, the advantage would be great to all parties. Should it be unfavourable, we must return to our present retaliatory system.—If this effort on our part were not met with a correspondent feeling on the part of America, opportunities would be afforded, in the absence of irritation, of fairly considering those circumstances which might restore and cement that friendship which ought always to be maintained between the two countries, and which it was the curse of both had ever been interrupted. If, by the fatal perseverance of France, Great Britain should be driven to re-adopt her retaliatory system, means might be adopted, without endangering its efficacy against the enemy, of rendering it less obnoxious to America. He concurred with the honourable and learned gentleman, that it would be a most unworthy and unwise policy in this country to allow itself to be provoked by the irritation which America had evinced. Was it not the part of a great empire like England to adopt a conciliatory course of conduct towards America, even at the time when her tone, although he trusted it would not lead to absolute war, sufficiently marked the hostile disposition of her councils? Although he did not wish to be too sanguine as to the result of this experiment, yet, persuaded as he was, that there had been moments of such great inconvenience to France, that had she not cherished hopes of final success from the occurrence of certain circumstances in this country, she would willingly have abandoned her projects, he could not help entertaining an expectation that she might be induced to return to the ancient system. Under all these circumstances, he trusted the House would not consent to the address. He would content himself with moving the order of the day. Were the documents illustrative of the negociation between this country and

America on the table, he should call for a distinct negative to the motion, but as they were not, so he did not wish to extract from the House any vote which might imply their approbation of the conduct of his majesty's government in that negociation."—In consequence of the above intimation, the motion for a repeal of the orders in council was withdrawn, on the understanding, that an official instrument, on the subject should appear in the next Gazette.

The promised declaration accordingly appeared. It stated, that by a prior declaration of the 1st of April, 1812, the repeal of the orders in council was to take place so soon as the French decrees were formally revoked; that a communication had been made by the American chargé des affaires to Lord Castlereagh, of a copy of the alleged instrument of repeal by the French government; and although this revocation was not such as to satisfy the conditions required by the British declaration, yet as Great Britain was anxious to replace the commerce of neutrals on its ancient basis, the orders of council of 7th January 1807, and 26th April 1809, were suspended as far as regarded American property, from the 1st of August following. As the armed vessels of Great Britain were excluded from the harbours of the United States, while those of France were admitted, and as all commercial intercourse with England had been suspended, it was declared, that if the American government should not, after the regular communication of the present document, alter its policy, then the repeal of the orders in council should not take effect. Provision was also made, that American ships, seized since the date of the communication relating to the French decrees, should not be condemned; and an express reservation was made of the right of the British government to revive the orders in council, and to adopt such measures of retaliation as it might deem expedient, when circumstances should demand such a course of proceeding.—Thus were the belligerent and maritime rights of Great Britain preserved, while her promise was faithfully kept of advancing *pari passu* with the French government, in the repeal of the anti-commercial edicts. The orders in council, which were at one period considered as of great political importance, were thus in some measure abandoned; and although the most enlightened men were of opinion, that this concession would not satisfy the desires of America, or ensure her friendship, yet was it expedient, perhaps, to manifest that anxiety for relieving the distresses of the country, which is the peculiar characteristic of a wise and humane government. It was predicted, indeed, that the Americans would not repeal the non-importation act; that they would insist on many other points besides the orders in council, to which they had originally confined themselves; and that, profiting by the spirit of concession and the love of peace which had been shewn by England, they would venture to bring forward claims, which every British statesman would consider as inadmissible. The concession was at all events of the nature of an experiment; but the impetuosity of the American factions did not afford time for trying which of the theories on this important subject was well founded.

The event so long anticipated at last arrived, and on the 18th of June, the president of the United States intimated his approval of an act of congress, by which war was declared against Great Britain. This act was preceded by a long message from the president, on which some stormy debates arose in both houses of congress.

—The message accused the British government of having, since the year 1803, persisted in a series of acts hostile to the United States, as an independent nation. It asserted, that British cruizers had violated the honour of the American flag, and seized persons sailing under it; that the seizure even of *British subjects*, without trial or enquiry, was contrary to the law of nations; but under pretence of searching for them, thousands of American citizens had been torn from their country, and compelled to fight for their oppressors. That to all the complaints made by America on this subject, no satisfactory answer had been given; and although she had been willing to have entered into arrangements, such as might have attained every useful end, if the recovery of British subjects had been the sole object, her communications had produced no effect. That British cruizers had violated the rights and the peace of the American coast; that the blood of American citizens had been wantonly spilt in the very harbours of the United States, and instead of punishment, the highest rewards had been bestowed by the British government, on the persons who had committed such atrocities. That by means of a nominal blockade without the presence of an adequate force, the commerce of America had been plundered on every sea; that the orders issued by the English government, had been tyrannically executed from their date, and before American vessels could be aware of their existence, and that Great Britain had at length resorted to a sweeping system, under the name of orders in council, which had been so contrived, as to suit the political views and commercial jealousy of England, and satisfy the avidity of her citizens. That the pretence of retaliation which had been used in defence of these orders was altogether groundless; that edicts executed against American property could not be a retaliation on those decrees of France, which it was manifestly impossible to execute, and that retaliation to be just, should fall only on the guilty. That England had recently declared her determination to insist on these measures until the markets of her enemy should be laid open to British commerce; that she had demanded a formality in the revocation of the French decrees by no means exemplified even by her own usage; and had declared that she would not rest satisfied with the repeal of the decrees, merely as they affected America, unless they were wholly and unconditionally revoked. That the object of the measures adopted by England, had not been so much to destroy the resources of her enemy, as to confirm her own monopoly; and although every effort had been tried by the United States to obtain an alteration of this iniquitous system,—although an offer had been made to interrupt all commercial intercourse with France, so long as she persevered in her injustice, yet the British government had been deaf to every remonstrance. That in the year 1810, the American minister in London had offered the British government a fair opportunity for conciliation; that he merely requested to know, whether the British blockade of 1806 was still considered as in force; and as this measure had afforded the pretence for the decree of the French government, it was expected that the disavowal of it by Great Britain, would have immediately led to the rescinding of the French edicts, and the restoration of neutral commerce. But the British government had persisted in refusing all explanation. That a fair prospect appeared again to present itself for the adjustment of all differences; but the

acts of the British minister in America, who might have accomplished this desirable object, were disavowed by his government; and at the very moment when these amicable proceedings were going forward, a secret agent of Great Britain was employed to cherish disaffection in the subjects of the United States, and to dissolve the happy union.—England was last of all charged with exciting the Indians to carry on their atrocious warfare against the people of the United States, although even the animosity of Mr Madison ventured only to state this as matter of suspicion. "We perceive, in fine," said Mr Madison, "on the side of Great Britain, a state of war against the United States, and on the side of the United States, a state of peace towards Great Britain."

Such were the heavy charges brought in this message against England, whose aggressions were thus pompously descanted on. But as to France, what were the conduct and language of the president? He confessed, in a short paragraph at the conclusion of his message, that the most atrocious violations of neutral rights had been committed by order of the French government, against the citizens of the United States; but although he was ready to recommend a declaration of war against England, he contented himself with intimating, that he hoped an adjustment might yet be effected with her enemies, who had carried the spirit of outrage to such extremities.

Such were the grounds on which the American legislature determined on resorting to hostilities against Great Britain; and how gross soever the mis-statements and futile the arguments of the American rulers, the act by which they had been followed, of course demanded from the British government the most prompt and vigorous measures. It had from the beginning been the anxious desire of the British government to conciliate America; it was the recorded opinion of the late chief minister, that more might be conceded to America than to any other country; and the same feelings seemed still to operate, in some measure, on those who now had the direction of public affairs. When the declaration of war was received, the only step taken at first was to issue instructions to the proper authorities, at home and abroad, to detain and send in all American vessels; an embargo being at the same time laid on all such vessels in British ports. It might have been a wiser policy at once to have adopted decisive measures; but the government and the people of England could hardly yet conceive that the Americans were serious in the hazardous enterprize which they had undertaken, and which had not been prompted by any proceedings in this country. The grounds for war urged in the president's message, were in the highest degree absurd: complaints which had been redressed, charges which had been refuted, were all pressed into the service of this manifesto, in order to meet the different feelings and opinions of all classes of the people. Yet to those who look into that strange document with care and penetration, it will be evident that the system of blockade, established by the administration of which Mr Fox was the head, was considered even by the Americans as the great cause of all the confusion which succeeded. The principle of this system, however, it was utterly impossible to concede without abandoning at once all the advantages of the maritime superiority of Great Britain. It is a singular circumstance also, and one which tends very much to prove the partiality of America towards France, that the declaration of war was issued immediately after the communication of the

report of the French minister, by which the principle of the French decrees was declared to form the fundamental law of the empire. Whether, therefore, the people of England looked to the avowed pretensions of the American government, or to the circumstances in which war had been declared, it was evident that a determination had been formed to resist the just claims of England, and to unite the influence and resources of America with those of France. The precipitate and unwarrantable conduct of America, however, struck every one with astonishment: even the members of opposition, who had promoted the enquiry into the orders in council, were firmly convinced that by the repeal of these measures, America ought to have been satisfied; and they declared, that should any further concession be demanded, they would be the most forward to resist the claim, and to support the honour of their country. Government therefore had every reason to count on the hearty support of all orders of persons; and it is not a little wonderful, that, in such circumstances, the slightest hesitation should have been felt to resort to measures of the utmost vigour.

The conduct of England, with regard to the orders in council, was a subject which nearly interested the French government; and accordingly the instrument of conditional revocation no sooner appeared in the English prints, than it was laboriously commented upon in Buonaparte's official paper. The French government declared at once that the revocation of the orders in council was of little consequence; that France had contended chiefly for a disavowal of the principle of blockade established by the administration of Mr Fox; and that unless Great Britain should return to the principles recognised at the treaty of Utrecht, no change could take place in the policy of France. The French ruler would acknowledge the blockade of such places only as might be attacked not merely by a naval force sufficient to reduce them, but surrounded also by land in such a manner as to preclude all safe access. This to be sure was an ingenious and convenient principle, as applicable to the situation of France; for although it was in the power of England at all times to blockade the towns on the coast by sea, it was no part of her policy at this moment to establish a blockade by land. According to the doctrine of the French government, then, the force of Great Britain must have been rendered totally ineffectual for the purposes of warfare against her enemy. Yet this *intelligible* declaration had a good effect, for it shewed with what contempt the French ruler treated the principles of those who advocated his cause in this country with so much earnestness. The admission of the principles of the French government on this subject, coupled with the other doctrines which it professed, must have rendered the naval superiority of England unavailing; and where is the man who, in such circumstances, could have hesitated as to the measures which it was incumbent on England to adopt? The predictions of those who had declaimed so much against the orders in council, were thus completely falsified; the revocation had not conciliated America, nor had it satisfied France; and both powers rose in their demands, relying no doubt on the statements so industriously circulated, that England revoked the orders in council, because perseverance in them must have ended in her own ruin.

The people of England were anxious to learn the effect which a knowledge of the repeal of the orders in council would produce on the American government.—It was soon known that

the conduct of that government had not obtained the unanimous sanction of its subjects; and that scarcely had a week elapsed after the declaration of war, before it was besieged by remonstrances couched in the most bitter terms of censure and reproach. The sentiments thus expressed had the effect of lowering the tone of the American official paper, which assured the citizens that their government was disposed to accommodate all differences on the most reasonable terms. From this it was inferred, that so soon as the repeal of the orders in council should be known, a change in the policy of the American rulers would be the inevitable consequence, and a test at all events would be afforded of the sincerity of their declarations.—Intelligence however was soon received, that the conduct of the republican or war faction had been ferocious to the highest degree. The federalists, or moderate party, had in several instances been treated with gross outrage for declaring their aversion to the war; and at Baltimore an affray of the most disgraceful kind had occurred, in which an old general, the friend of Washington, was murdered, and another severely wounded. These transactions displayed the character of the American mob, and extinguished in reflecting men every hope that the voice of reason and moderation might ultimately prevail.

While the public mind was still in suspense as to the future policy of the American government, an appeal to arms had already been made; and the first military operations of the Americans were attended with the most signal disasters. Their general (Hull) who had undertaken to invade Upper Canada, had ended his short career by surrendering himself and the whole of his army, with the fort of Detroit, and forty-three pieces of cannon, to the British Major-General Brock, who obtained almost a bloodless victory, only eighteen of the British having been killed and wounded.—The circumstances of this affair were extremely singular. On the 12th of July, General Hull, after crossing the river Detroit, arrived at Sandwich, a small open place, the capture of which was the first and last of his successes. He then approached Amherstberg, confident of victory; but by the rapid movement of the small British army opposed to him, a fort was taken which at once exposed his flank and rear to the attack of his enemy. He was still protected, however, by Fort Detroit; he had a force of 2,500 men, while that of the British amounted not to half the number; yet did they determine to storm the American camp. But General Hull was not prepared to resist this vigorous measure, and he at once surrendered at discretion to the conquerors.

Such was the brilliant result of the first of the British military operations during the present American war. Yet was this success in some measure counterbalanced by an event which the people of England were little prepared to expect. A great anxiety had been expressed that the British and Americans might meet at sea; of the result of such an encounter no doubt was entertained. The Guerriere British frigate of 38 guns, fell in with the American frigate the Constitution, carrying 46 guns, much heavier than those of the Guerriere; the American seamen also were nearly double the number of the British. An obstinate action ensued. The mizen-mast of the Guerriere fell at the first broadside; the rest of her masts soon went overboard; yet with all these disadvantages—against the prodigious superiority in weight of metal, as well as in the numbers of men which the Americans possessed, she fought till she was ready to founder. Such was her state

at the close of the action, that the Americans were obliged to set her on fire; they were thus deprived of the satisfaction of carrying her in triumph into port. Yet although this affair, so far from reflecting discredit on the officers and crew of the Guerriere, was such as to sustain the reputation of the British navy, a deep feeling of disappointment and regret was experienced in consequence of the disaster

The revocation of the orders in council produced no effect on the American government, which still insisted on the principles—that free bottoms should make free goods; that British seamen should in no instance be taken out of American ships; and that the British principle of blockade should be abandoned. The first principle no British minister would have dared to concede; on the second, England was always willing to have come to an amicable arrangement with America. She had officially intimated her readiness to prohibit impressments from American vessels, if the Americans would enact laws prohibiting their officers from granting protections, or certificates of citizenship, to British subjects The third and last principle, that of blockade, was one on which there could be no compromise, without sacrificing the superiority of Great Britain at sea.

The surrender of General Hull produced a deep sensation of gloom throughout America, and violent altercations arose with respect to his conduct. The government contended that he had been guilty of the basest cowardice; while he and his friends maintained, that the means with which he had been supplied were inadequate to the expedition entrusted to him The project of conquering Canada was by many represented as ridiculous and whimsical in the extreme. "On what principle," it was asked, "could the rulers of a country, part of which was uninhabited; a country whose government, and almost every man living under it, had land to sell; a country in which husbandry and the arts languish for want of men, endeavour to purchase lands with the lives of its citizens? America wants men and money, not land; and yet the government was about to surrender men and money in the uncertain hope of adding millions of acres, covered with eternal snow, to those millions of fertile soil which America already possessed, and which remained useless for want of hands to cultivate them."

The British arms were destined to attain yet higher honours in the defence of Canada. A second attempt to invade this settlement was made under the American General Wadsworth, who, on the 13th of October, attacked Queenstown with a considerable force. He was, in the first instance, successful in carrying the position, but was not allowed to retain it long. Major-General Brock having come up with a small body of men, composed of regular troops, militia, and Indians, a successful attempt was made to turn the flank of the Americans, while their attention was engaged by an attack of artillery in front. The enemy was thus assailed at all points, and, after a short but spirited conflict, was completely defeated. Brigadier-General Wadsworth, with the whole of his officers, and upwards of 900 men, were made prisoners; the loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was very considerable. That of the British was trifling; yet the country had to regret the fall of Major General Brock, who perished in this gallant and successful enterprize. Thus were the British arms once more victorious against a prodigious superiority of numbers; and the attempt of the Americans to accomplish the conquest of Canada was again defeated.

The American people, disheartened

with these repeated disasters, seem to have been anxious for an adjustment of their differences with Great Britain; but their government was determined to prevent any pacific arrangement by the terms which it demanded. An armistice was proposed by the president, on condition that the orders in council should be repealed without a revival of the blockade; that American seamen in British ships should be discharged; and that a stop should be put to their impressment in future. The advantages were thus to be all on the side of America; she was to have the benefit of the repeal of the orders in council, and to obtain the unconditional discharge of all seamen who had obtained certificates of American citizenship. And all this she demanded as the condition of her suspending, for a time, the operation of her mighty means of warfare against England!—Such propositions could not be acceded to. The president, in another speech to congress, complained much of the conduct of Great Britain, and indulged in numerous misrepresentations. He repeated his assertion, that the Indians in our service had committed the most shocking cruelties; and contrasted our conduct with the pacific demeanour of the people of the United States, who were anxious only to promote civilization among these tribes. Yet the best evidence to prove the humanity of the British in this respect, is to be found in the dispatches of Major-General Brock, an officer whose memory will be dear to every Englishman—"When this contest commenced," he said, "many of the Indian nations were engaged in actual war with the United States, notwithstanding the greatest endeavours of this government to dissuade them from it. From the moment the war commenced, they took a most active part, and appeared firm on every occasion. They were led yesterday by Colonel Elliot, and nothing could exceed their ardour and steadiness. A few prisoners were taken by them, whom they treated with every humanity, and it affords me much pleasure to state, that such was their forbearance and attention to what was required of them, that the enemy sustained no other loss in men than what was occasioned by the fire of our batteries."—Such therefore were the proposals of the American government for an armistice, and such its misrepresentations as to the mode in which the war had been conducted. Yet, confident as the rulers of America were, they were forced to acknowledge that the war was unpopular; that the states of Massachusets and Connecticut had refused to furnish their proportions of militia towards the defence of the maritime frontier; and that the finances were in a state of decay.

The Americans were destined most unexpectedly for a while to enjoy an apparent triumph at sea, which the confidence of the British in the virtue of their navy rendered at once surprising and afflicting. The Macedonian frigate was, on the 25th December, captured after a severe and desperate action by the American frigate United States. The inequality in the size of the vessels, in the number and weight of the guns, and the disproportion in the number of men, were not less striking in this instance than in that of the Guerriere. Yet the action was obstinately contested, and the British frigate surrendered only in consequence of a number of untoward accidents which could not have been foreseen, but not till she had been reduced to a state which sufficiently evinced the bravery and perseverance of the officers and crew.—A violent and unjust clamour was now raised against the admiralty and the government, which, however, was very

easily put down, by an impartial enquiry into the circumstances in which these distressing events had occurred. It was asked, why had not the Macedonian been manned in the same manner with the American frigate? The obvious answer was, that she had not been intended to meet an American vessel called a frigate; that on the extended scale of the British navy, it had not been considered possible, and never had been thought necessary, to arm or man British frigates in that manner. There had been no insufficiency of naval force on the American station at the commencement of the war; from Halifax to the West Indies there were stationed ships seven times more powerful than those of the whole American navy collected. But to the groundless apprehensions generated in a moment of disappointment, the best answer was given in the following sensible observations, which may be read with interest, when the puny navy of America shall cease to be remembered.

"There are three of the American frigates, viz. the Constitution, the President, and the United States, which were originally intended for line of battle ships, and are of 1600 tons burthen, and upwards, admeasurement. They carry fourteen twenty-four pounders, long guns, on a side, on their main-deck, and are armed on their quarter-deck and forecastle, which nearly meet, with thirteen thirty-two pounder carronades of a side, making a total of fifty-four heavy guns. By their capacity this battery is elevated possibly ten feet above the lead water line, from the lower sill of the main-deck ports.

"It is right further to remark, that this great capacity enables them to possess considerably larger scuttles for ventilating them betwixt decks, and by such combined power of space and air, they are enabled to carry a complement of 450 to 500 men. It is also worthy of remark, that this portion of their navy is the *elitè* of the corps, has been long in commission, and commanded by their best officers; add to which, that they are our own degenerate sons that man them, many of whom are absolutely fighting against us (as it were) with halters about their necks.

"The rest of their frigate navy are like our own, and of a similar size and equipment.

"The out-cry made against the government is, that this small comparative force has not already been swallowed up. They, however, like a "mouse on Salisbury plain," and having a roving commission, are of course not long in one spot. When met at sea by the Guerriere and Macedonian, two of our heaviest frigates now in commission, the fight was between single ships, and the result has been known, to the sorrow certainly of all lovers of their country. But will it be asserted by any one that our whole frigate navy must be remodelled in consequence of this check, possibly a salutary one, for our vanity might require it; would it not be better at once to declare, that their three ships, viz the Constitution, President, and United States, are line of battle ships, having equipments in men and ordnance and capacity equal thereto, and exonerate our captains of frigates from going alongside of them, unless assisted by some additional force. It should be remembered by the public that a captain of a British 32-gun frigate mounting only 12-pounder carronades, is bound to fight any single-decked ship (meaning thereby "gun-deck" as contradistinguished from quarter-deck and fore-castle, though their two platforms nearly meet) and consequently proceeds into battle, a willing sacrifice to the honour of the flag, whose independence

he is most certainly bound to maintain. But surely there should be some bounds to such honourable chivalry. Formerly it was necessary, or at least thought so, for a regiment to remain exposed to a severe galling fire which possibly they could not return to advantage, merely because a British soldier was never to turn his back on an enemy. But such courage is better managed now a-days, thanks to Lord Wellington and other able men who have learnt in his lordship's school. And why not permit our frigates (of which I repeat again the Guerriere and Macedonian are as good specimens of force as we can bring; and being both taken in single action, shews that they are not equal to such frigates of the American navy as before described) to retire from such force, as they are accustomed to do from two-deck ships?

"It is said by some who rather delight in exhibiting any loss of war (this country must in common share with other nations) as the faults of the persons whose cause they do not espouse, that we do not man our ships enough. Why, say they, not put the same number of men as the American frigates? The answer is easy, our frigates cannot stow them; and, if stow them, or rather crowd them, they could not take the necessary supplies of provisions, for the usual period of a common foreign service. Our frigates of the first class, with the exception of the Endymion and Cambrian, the former now repairing, and the latter either taken to pieces or about to be, are about 1050 tons, 600 tons less than either of the frigates before described.

"It may be then said, and indeed is already said, build them!—This certainly may be done, and possibly will be to a proper extent, if any fit two-decked ships whose upper works are in a state of decay, can be found to cut down. It is also possible that the department of the government, to which this great responsibility attaches, may be disposed to do so; but it requires considerable care in the selection of the ships, not only as to their state of repair, but also as to their form of body, for an easy two-decked ship may be a most laborious single-decked ship, and she may be dismasted in the first gale she encounters. Time must also be given for such a process. It is easy for persons who know little of the subject to clamour, why have we not this or this? the moment it is wanted. Do our countrymen, at least the sensible part, forget that our navy, with the most rigid economy, costs us twenty millions annually, and would, if such prodigality were used, cost us thirty millions? Do they forget of what perishable materials ships are composed? Do they forget that dreadful disease the dry rot? But suppose we had three or four or six, say of this description of frigates, like the American ones, either by building or cutting down larger ships for the purpose, it may happen, and most likely will happen, that they never meet the large Americans. The two finest frigates of ours, the Endymion and Cambrian, have, I will not say not been engaged at all, but certainly never with a frigate of any sort.

"But even admitting that we had them, and that they did meet, might not some of our fast-sailing two-decked ships now in the American seas be equally and successfully employed—nay better; for the certainty of victory, with a comparatively less loss, would be greater. On the whole, therefore, I consider that the nation should at once vote, as it were, these three American *soi disant frigates*, line of battle ships, and support a man, and not run his character down, who considered it right to retire from one—they would then be of no more

consequence than any other ship of war; and by being liable to capture by one of our two-deckers, are the description of ships, that, if the American war could long continue, would be too expensive as frigates, and not of force for the line."

Such then was the result of the first operations of this second American war, a war which had been undertaken by the government of the United States from the most unworthy motives; from a system of policy which sought to undermine the energies of the British empire, and to support the ambition of France; to overwhelm the only state which resisted the arrogance of despotism, and stood manfully forward in defence of the independence of nations. The glory of the British arms was fully sustained by the operations of that little band of heroes to whom the defence of Canada was entrusted. The military prowess of the Americans had appeared contemptible in the eyes of the world; nor had their naval efforts gained them any great credit with those who were capable of reflecting on the prodigious advantages under which their short-lived triumphs had been gained, and on the energy and resolution which had been evinced by British sailors, even at a moment when all the chances of war and every combination of circumstances conspired against them to a degree, which must have repressed the ardour of all but those, in whom heroism is an innate and indestructible principle.

CHAP. XI.

Affairs of the Peninsula. Retrospect of the War in that part of the World. Projects of Lord Wellington. Capture of Ciudad Rodrigo—Of Badajos. Destruction of the Bridge of Almarez.

THE war in Spain exhibited at its commencement a favourable view of the Spanish character, and seemed to open very brilliant prospects for the continent of Europe. When the power of France over the surrounding nations seemed to mock all resistance; when her armies had humbled some of the greatest monarchies, and blotted others from the list of independent states; when a general feeling of submissive terror seemed to fill the minds of the continental rulers, the patriots of Spain broke the deadly spell, and bade defiance to their oppressors. The folly of Buonaparte in provoking a resistance of this character and magnitude will be very generally acknowledged. Spain he already retained in real vassalage; her fleets, her armies, her resources of all kinds, were at his disposal; the decrepid and pusillanimous despotism which enslaved this fine country knew no law but his will. While he transacted with such a government he was safe; but by an undisguised outrage on all laws, he made his criminal views manifest to Europe, and raised in the Spanish people that patriotism, of which the other continental nations no longer gave an example. By appointing the lowest minion of his tyranny to govern Spain, he could not have expected more entire submission, than he already received from the government which he thus risked every thing to supersede; while by an act of violence so palpable he could not fail to alarm the pride and excite the indignation of the meanest Spaniard. He preferred, however, the gratification of his arrogance to the stability of his power; he insulted and outraged the people of Spain beyond all endurance, and called forth in a bold, but undisciplined peasantry, a spirit which in the first instance, overthrew the finest of his legions.

The enthusiasm of the Spaniards was warmly seconded by the generosity of the British nation. It is scarcely too much to say that a determination to support this people in their honourable struggle was universal among Englishmen, since the few who hesitated were of a character that deprived their opinions of all title to regard. To what extent such support might be required, and in what shape it might be most prudent to afford it, were questions on which some difference of opinion did arise, and which it was difficult to settle, till the character and prospects of the war should be developed. But that

every nerve should be strained to promote this glorious contest, and to take advantage of the spirit which the madness of the enemy had created, was the sentiment of every British statesman of any eminence, and the enthusiastic desire of the British people. The English saw with indignation, scarcely inferior to that of the sufferers, the base and profligate schemes by which the enemy sought to subject a great nation; they recognised in the triumph of the Spanish cause, that of justice and morality throughout Europe; they looked forward to the deliverance of Spain, as the emancipation of a fine people from tyranny both foreign and domestic, and the re-establishment of a powerful state, which might restrain the overweening ambition of France upon the continent. Such were the views, equally magnanimous and solid, which in this country created a deeper interest in Spanish affairs, than had before been felt in the transactions of any foreign state.

Great reliance was at first placed on the efforts of the Spaniards themselves; and it must be owned that the overwhelming burst of patriotism which, in the first campaign, seemed to carry every thing before it, might have justified this confidence. These expectations, however, were sadly disappointed; no vigorous or efficient system was pursued by the Spanish authorities; no men of such talents, as revolutions have called forth in other countries, appeared, to guide the destinies of Spain. The Spanish armies have never borne any proportion to the population and resources of the country; they have been uniformly defective in discipline; while their officers have in general been deficient in all the qualities of the military character, courage alone excepted. The Spanish armies, hastily enlisted, were too often led by their inexperienced officers into battle long before they had been prepared by a previous course of discipline; and they have with wonderful facility been routed and dispersed. Down to the period of which we are now to give an account, the regular armies of Spain had done little towards the expulsion of the enemy; while the government had discovered but a slender portion of that wisdom and vigour, which were so loudly called for by the awful circumstances of the crisis in which they were destined to act.

The character of the Spanish revolution will account, in some measure, for this deplorable inactivity, which has astonished all Europe. The Spaniards were not roused to action by the desire of enjoying more liberty than they already possessed under their old government—they were not animated by these extravagant aspirations, which had given a character of ferocious energy to the revolutionary career of their neighbours. An attachment to their ancient rulers, and to the independence of their country, formed the basis of their revolution; the wild enthusiasm of individual ambition had little or no share in their efforts. The principle of the Spanish revolution was the most honourable which can animate a people—love for their country and hatred of its oppressors; but this principle is never so lively and active as that which aspires to individual aggrandizement and glory. Fighting for the restoration of a government which systematically checked the growth of talents, the Spanish patriot could have no hope that his most distinguished services would ever secure for him the highest rewards; such reflections might not damp the honest ardour of real patriotism, but must have repressed that exuberance of genius which the difficulties of the country so imperiously demanded. The ultimate triumph of the cause

for which so many exertions were required, must at once have reduced the most aspiring to something like his original obscurity, and defrauded him of the high rewards to which he would naturally look forward. Had the revolution in Spain resembled that of France—had the convulsion been so great as to resolve society into its elements, and cast the chances of future rank and pre-eminence on the decision of the sword, the military genius of Spain might have been developed, and that country might have passed through a scene of horrors to a higher rank among the European states than she seems for the present destined to attain. But there is no chance that even in the most favourable circumstances she could have rivalled revolutionary France in a display of talent; for the thick darkness which had obscured her ancient glory, could not have been instantaneously dissipated even by the most fiery revolution. The circumstances, however, in which she was called upon to resist a powerful invader, were altogether most unpropitious to the evolution of her natural energies; and the consequence has been, that, although the Spanish peasantry are both brave and patriotic, they have too often been doomed to perish by the ignorance and folly of their leaders. It was in the irregular warfare which was now carried on with much zeal by the Guerillas, that the national qualities of the Spaniards were displayed to the greatest advantage. This species of warfare required no very high talents for its management; it demanded but the local knowledge, the courage and constancy of the Spanish peasantry, and the resolute and daring spirit of enterprise which prevailed among their chiefs. Formidable indeed were these unexpected and invisible enemies to the French, of whom incredible numbers became victims to their fury. It has been said with truth, that if the defence of Spain had been committed to the Guerillas alone, although they might have been unable to expel the invader, they would never have ceased to disturb him; and Spain, by their irregular efforts, made the only compensation, which in her circumstances could be expected, for that want of system and genius which were to be supplied by the generosity of her allies.

In the Marquis of Wellington, who had already become illustrious by his talents, and renowned for his exploits, the Spanish nation were destined to find their deliverer. This great man, before his appointment to the command of the British armies in the peninsula, had distinguished himself as an able and enterprising officer; but the field on which he acted was narrow in comparison, and the events in which he bore so conspicuous a part, were not much regarded in Europe. His friends, however, to whom the extent and fertility of his genius were in some measure known, hesitated not to predict something great and extraordinary from his future career; and one of his political enemies (but that one distinguished alike by his penetration and magnanimity) made an honourable confession in the British senate of the profound respect and entire confidence with which this young soldier had inspired him. Little was it imagined, however, with what splendid rapidity these fond anticipations were to be fulfilled. The mind of Lord Wellington, equally solid and comprehensive, his genius at once prudent and daring, was soon to find ample scope in the affairs of Spain. He was sent out with a handful of men to defend Portugal against the overwhelming host of the enemy; with a fine sagacity he seized and fortified a position, which in the meantime saved that country; and he calmly waited for an opportunity, which he foresaw must

sooner or later occur, to make the enemy repent of his usurpation. When he took the command in the peninsula, he found the economy of the army in a state of great confusion; in an instant he remedied every thing, and raised the discipline of his troops to as high a superiority as their valour. He discovered, through the mist of prejudice, the true character of the Portugueze people; he saw that they had the materials of military excellence; and, in spite of clamour and faction, he had them turned into soldiers, and rendered worthy of fighting by the side of British troops. He comprehended at once the character of the Spanish war in all its bearings; he observed that the numbers of the French armies must, in circumstances which he himself could create, only ensure their speedy destruction; he drew them round him in a country which famine compelled them to abandon; and he seized the opportunity to destroy them in their retreat. Not dismayed by the prodigious advantages which his enemy possessed over him in the numbers of his troops, in the resources, almost unlimited, which enabled him to supply his losses with the greatest rapidity, and in the possession of all the strong places of Spain, he seems, at an early period, to have formed the gigantic project of destroying the French power, and expelling the invader from the peninsula. He knew the disposition of his government, and the ardour of his country to support him in his grand enterprise; but he knew also, that the military resources of England, which could be conveniently devoted to the war in this quarter, were necessarily limited; and he was sensible of the difficulties which he should have to encounter in the ignorance, the false pride, and the prejudices of the Spanish government. He was sometimes unaably circumscribed, and often mischievously thwarted in his high career, yet did he continue on all occasions to add to the splendour of his own reputation, and the glory of the British empire. The battles which he had hitherto fought had been brilliant, and it was not the fault of his character, but of his situation, that they had not proved decisive; he had acted with boldness and resolution, and had displayed a quality which seems essential to British commanders—a confidence in the valour of his troops, of which he has never had cause to repent. He entered on the campaign of this year with greater advantages than he had ever before possessed—his army was more numerous, and in a higher state of discipline—the irregular efforts of the Spaniards promised a more active co-operation than they had hitherto afforded, and a prospect begun to open that the strength of France and her tributary states might find employment in the north of Europe. Yet were the difficulties which presented themselves of a magnitude to have appalled any other general; for not only were there large French armies in the north, south, centre, and east of Spain, but fortresses to reduce, which the enemy had strengthened by all the ingenious resources of art. But this great commander was not to be dismayed; he formed the bold plan of advancing into the centre of Spain, with an army, to which even one of the enemy's was a match in point of numbers—of storming and reducing the strongest fortresses, and of driving out the invaders in the course of one brilliant campaign. It is the highest praise which can be bestowed on Lord Wellington to say, that even in the course of this year he nearly accomplished his object, and failed at last by accidents for which he was in no way responsible. But the character of this illustrious warrior, who rises above his contemporaries not more by the endowments of his mind than the virtues of his heart, will be

best understood by a simple narration of his exploits, which have filled all Europe with astonishment and admiration.

The events of the preceding year, although highly honourable to the British arms, were not attended with consequences of much importance. The fine position which Lord Wellington had selected in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, and which his judicious exertions had rendered almost impregnable, destroyed the hopes of Massena, who commanded a large army, and had promised to drive the English into the sea. The French remained before the British position, but did not venture on an attack, while the British general, with admirable self-command, waited for the moment when the difficulties of the enemy should compel him to retreat. Massena commenced a precipitate retreat accordingly in the spring of the preceding year. The British followed him, and invested Almeida, the northern barrier of Portugal, which they reduced, after having gloriously repulsed the enemy, who had hastened to its relief.—In the south, the Spaniards had been singularly unfortunate. The death of Romana—the appointment of Mendizabal, a weak and contemptible person, to succeed him—the consequent loss of a considerable detachment already thrown into Olivenza, and; above all, the treacherous and cowardly surrender of Badajoz, had occasioned great confusion. The recovery of this fortress, which had been so basely given up, was of great importance in the estimation of Lord Wellington; and he began the siege with vigour—defeated Soult, who tried to relieve it, in the memorable battle of Albuera, but was at last compelled to abandon the enterprise, by the advance of the collected forces of the enemy, which it would have been madness to oppose. A similar result followed an attempt made in the end of the year to reduce Ciudad Rodrigo, when Marmont, after evacuating the whole north of Spain, pressed down with a very formidable army.

Little, therefore, had been gained by either party in the campaign of 1811. On the western frontiers of Spain, the British had won nothing but glory, with which they were already covered, and had succeeded in affording opportunities to the Spaniards, of which the latter were in no haste to avail themselves. In the east of Spain, however, the most unexpected misfortunes had befallen the Spaniards, and those provinces which had been the theatre of the bravest resistance to the invader, were almost entirely subjugated. Suchet, who had been appointed by Buonaparte to conduct the war in this quarter, where Spaniards alone, and Spaniards commanded by the most unfortunate of captains, were to be opposed, was successful in all his enterprises. He entirely defeated Blake in the neighbourhood of Zaragoza; he captured Lerida and Tortosa, and after an obstinate defence, reduced Tarragona to ashes. For a moment the Catalans were struck with consternation, produced not more by the misfortunes which they had suffered, than by the savage and vindictive cruelty with which their virtue had been persecuted. They still retained, however, the islands of Las Medas on the eastern coast; they could find positions on the Pyrenean frontier, and, above all, they retained their former spirit of patriotism and revenge. New armies were speedily raised; their formation and discipline were favoured by the eagerness of Suchet to press forward on Valencia; and the province of Catalonia was once more in arms. Blake, whose very name was ominous to the army which he commanded, got into Valencia with

five-and-twenty thousand men. Suchet laid siege to the castle of Murviedro (the ancient Saguntum) and Blake tried to relieve the castle by fighting a general battle with the enemy, in which he committed every sort of blunder, and was totally defeated. He retired towards Valencia, on which the French marshal advanced with rapidity—surprised and again defeated the Spaniards—cut off the retreat of Blake, and drove him into the city. Suchet pressed the siege—Blake made an abortive effort to escape with his army, and failing in this, ignominiously surrendered himself and his soldiers prisoners of war. Thus was the east of Spain overrun by the enemy, at the beginning of the present year. A desire to relieve this fine country, formed one great inducement to the British commander to open the campaign at an early period of the year, and with a spirit of enterprise which promised the greatest results.

It was necessary to the plan of operations which Lord Wellington had formed, that he should first of all make himself master of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. Early in the month of January, therefore, the army crossed the Agueda, and on the 8th, the first of these fortresses was invested. General Hill was in the meantime detached against Dombrowski, who was posted at Merida, and who retreated with precipitation on the approach of the British. General Hill next proceeded against Drouet, who commanded the fifth division at Almendralejo; but this officer having been apprised of the movements of the British, retired upon Zafra, leaving his stores and ammunition. By these operations, Marmont and Soult were effectually separated; the country betwixt the Tagus and Guadiana was cleared of the enemy; Drouet was thrown back on Llerena, and Badajoz, which was soon to be attacked, was, by the occupation of Merida, reduced to the utmost extremity for want of provisions. Soult was placed in a state of complete inactivity; and Lord Wellington was left to pursue his operations against Ciudad Rodrigo and the army of Marmont.—The siege was pressed with extraordinary vigour, and with astonishing success. The place, indeed, had been greatly strengthened by the enemy; on the hill of St Francisco he had constructed a redoubt, which communicated with three fortified convents in the suburbs; and he had in all other respects discovered his usual skill and activity. Yet on the evening of the very day on which the siege was begun, a detachment of the division under Lieutenant Colonel Colbourne of the 52d, stormed and carried the redoubt on the hill, took some prisoners, and put their comrades to the sword.

These important successes enabled the British to break ground near the works. On the evening of the 14th, a fire was opened from the first parallel with twenty-two pieces of ordnance and three batteries; and on the same evening, the besiegers established themselves in the second parallel, and within 150 yards of the place. In ten days from the opening of the siege, the approaches were completed; several breaches were made in the wall; and the resolution was taken to carry the works by storm. As Lord Wellington did not find it convenient to advance his approaches so near as had been usual on former occasions, it required the highest efforts of gallantry to succeed in the assault. The storming parties, in five separate columns, composed of the third and light divisions of the army, and of Brigadier General Pack's brigade, were ordered to advance; that under General Pack was ordered to make a false attack. Lieutenant-General Picton, and Major-General Crawford, both offi-

cers of great talents, took a conspicuous part in the operations; and the efforts of all the columns were crowned with success.—It is a singular circumstance in this affair, that the ardour and impetuosity of the troops converted the false attack into a real one; the enemy was charged in this direction—driven into his works, and speedily subdued. The second battalion of the 5th regiment, under Major Ridge, with the 94th regiment, under Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, gallantly stormed the principal breach in the body of the place. Major General M'Kinnon, with the brigade under his command, came up to their support; the defence was well maintained by the French; but all their efforts were unavailing. The besiegers bore down all resistance; but in the moment of victory, a very severe loss was sustained by the British army, in the death of Major General M'Kinnon, who fell at the head of his storming party. The loss of the British in this brilliant affair, amounted to about 1200 killed and wounded; but the conquest was of great importance, in the present state of the campaign, and reflected the highest honour on the British arms.—In the short space of ten days, one of the great fortresses on the Portugueze frontier, strengthened by all the resources of art, had thus been wrested from the enemy,—a fortress which, when in a state of comparative weakness, and garrisoned by Spaniards, it had taken Massena a whole month to reduce, supported as he was by an army of 110,000 men. The satisfaction which this triumph diffused over the country, was enhanced by the favourable report which the British commander gave of the patriotism of the Spanish people, from whom therefore it was reasonable to expect in future more zeal than they had hitherto displayed.

Marmont had established his cantonments on the banks of the Tagus, with the view of ensuring supplies for his army, and supporting the operations against Valencia. He had detached General Montbrun, with 5,000 men, to take the army of Valencia in rear; but the general failed in this object as well as in a *coup de main*, which he attempted against Alicant.—Marmont, however, collected a large army from the north and centre of Spain; he advanced to Salamanca, and there he learned the fate of Ciudad Rodrigo, which struck him with astonishment. He knew that the garrison had been strong; that the fortifications were in the highest order, and had never imagined that the place could have been reduced with such rapidity. In the official account of this event, which he transmitted to his government, he expressed a degree of surprise, which implied the highest compliment to the skill and valour of his enemies. He advanced, however, and offered battle to Lord Wellington, in the vain hope that the British general, after having attained his object, would have turned aside to risk an engagement on terms so unequal. When he found that he had no hopes of success in this attempt, he retired, and placed his army in cantonments along the Tormes.

The highest honour to which a British subject can aspire is to obtain the thanks of parliament;—to be rewarded by the grateful applause of his country. The reduction of Ciudad Rodrigo was an exploit which well merited this honourable distinction; and the ministers accordingly hastened to call the attention of the legislature to the subject. In moving the thanks of the House of Lords to Lord Wellington and his gallant army, the Earl of Liverpool pointed out with great force and precision the distinguishing features of the late operations. He began by stating, That, "in the consideration of questions of this nature, there

were two points which more particularly called for attention, namely, the importance of the place wrested from the enemy, and the vigour of the effort used to obtain possession of it. He did not mean to say, that either of these might not, in some cases, be a sufficient ground for voting the thanks of the House, but, in the present instance, both considerations combined to call upon the House to confer that high honour. Of the importance of Ciudad Rodrigo there could be no doubt; it was the only fortress of note on the north-eastern frontier of Portugal, and on the north-western frontier of Spain. It was originally erected by the Spaniards as a point of defence against any invasion from Portugal, and also as a place of arms to facilitate offensive operations in that country, and the circumstances connected with the current of the river on which it was placed, rendered it in both points of view highly important. By its capture, the defence of Portugal was rendered complete, and at the same time a way was opened almost into the centre of Spain.—Having thus mentioned the importance of this fortress, he thought it necessary to state a few circumstances, to shew why the capture of it by the enemy in 1810 could not be prevented. It was well known, as stated by the French commander-in-chief himself, that the French force destined for the attack on Portugal was 110,000 men; of this force 27,000 laid siege to Ciudad Rodrigo. Lord Wellington at that time had only with him 17,000 British, and 14,000 Portugueze, the latter completely untried. The British commander-in-chief never lost sight of the importance of relieving the place, if possible, and to the last moment had the object in view, but the Portuguese troops being then completely untried, it became a consideration of prudence how far it was advisable to try them under circumstances peculiarly disadvantageous. It was also to be considered, that the allied army must have fought the enemy with the Agueda in their rear, and that even if they had defeated the covering army, still, with the river in their rear, and embarrassed as they necessarily would be with wounded, it was more than doubtful whether any advantage could thus be gained. The defence of Portugal was also of the greatest importance; it was not merely one point that was to be attended to, but the ultimate defence of the country; and Lord Wellington being certain that he could effectually defend Portugal by having recourse to the lines of Torres Vedras, it was essential not to run the hazard of wasting unprofitably the troops through whom that defence was to be made. After Marshal Massena had retreated from Portugal, Lord Wellington's attention was again called to Ciudad Rodrigo, but his operations in that quarter were interrupted by those of the enemy in Estremadura, to which province the pressure of the war was necessarily for a time removed. Subsequently to the cessation of these movements, other circumstances operated to delay the attack upon Ciudad Rodrigo. It was well known that there was no bridge over the Agueda near Ciudad Rodrigo, except the bridge of the place itself; and at certain seasons of the year, the river was so much swollen by the mountain torrents, that it became impracticable to throw any bridge over it. Lord Wellington also judged it expedient, before laying siege to Ciudad Rodrigo, to have Almeida as a depot, for which purpose it was necessary that the fortifications should be restored, and he was happy to state that Almeida was now in a respectable state of defence.—In the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo there were many circumstances which must be highly sa-

tisfactory. When the enemy laid siege to it in 1810, they completed the investment on the 10th of June, and the place did not surrender by capitulation till the 11th of July. Lord Wellington invested the place on the 8th of January, and this, it should be remembered, under all the disadvantages of a siege in the depth of winter, and the place was taken by storm on the 19th of that month. In recounting this, it was a subject of no ordinary satisfaction to observe the skill and ability manifested by the engineers and the artillery. Thus completing the proof that in every branch of our military service our superiority was decidedly manifest—our infantry, our cavalry, our engineers, our artillery, our commissariat, all were proved to be decidedly superior—a superiority resulting from a wise system at home carried into practice by the wisdom, the skill, and the exertions of our commander-in-chief in Portugal. The enemy no longer vaunted of superiority, no longer boasted of driving British troops into the sea, it being now apparent to all the world, that with British hearts in British bosoms we maintained a decided superiority on whatever element we fought.—The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst it was of essential importance to those great interests which we were engaged in supporting, was a blow to the enemy which he did not expect. It was not conceived possible that Ciudad Rodrigo could have been taken in eleven days. The calculation made upon scientific rules was, that it might hold out for twenty four or twenty five days. Lord Wellington, however, was aware of the importance of rapidity, and the most unparalleled exertions were made, which were happily crowned with success. The enemy had not the slightest expectation of such an event, and he knew that Marshal Marmont calculated on being in good time on the 29th of January to relieve the place—for which purpose the French commander was collecting troops from different quarters, and to do this necessarily weakened the force in other parts.—Whether, therefore, they considered the importance of the place itself, the indefatigable exertions used to achieve its capture in so short a time, or the importance of the success with a view to further operations which were planned by Lord Wellington, he thought their lordships must agree that the commander and the army deserved their thanks. Whatever opinions there might exist as to the policy of our operations in Portugal, he thought there could be no difference of opinion as to the skill and ability of the commander-in-chief, or the bravery and spirit of the army which he commanded. Justice, as well as policy, demanded that they should uphold the honour and the character of our commanders and our armies. To do this was true policy; for let it not be forgotten, that to our officers and to our army, who so skilfully and so bravely defended Portugal and defeated the enemy, we must be indebted, if the necessity should arise, for the defence of our own shores. His lordship concluded by moving the thanks of the House to General Lord Viscount Wellington, for the skill, ability, and indefatigable exertions, and consummate wisdom, manifested by him in the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo."

When a similar vote was proposed in the House of Commons, General Tarleton, who had never been very forward to approve of the policy of the war in Spain, "begged to add a few expressions of admiration, flowing not merely from his lips, but dictated by his heart. It was impossible," he said, "to add any thing, by brilliancy of description, to the lustre of the late transaction; but as the oldest general in that House,

he wished to point out in it some characteristic marks of British gallantry. Whether the skill of the commander-in-chief, or the bravery of his troops, were referred to, he defied any nation to produce an example of similar splendour, of troops so steady under arms, or so silent in attacks made under cover of the night. If the leader of any of our columns were disabled, the efforts of his troops were not relaxed. When what was technically called "the forlorn hope" was to be formed for the purpose of the assault, instead of 350 volunteers, which were required, no less than 700 men instantly offered themselves from only two regiments. He would not waste the time of the House by further dilation, since it was impossible for the genius, the eloquence, the research, or the memory, of all its members to produce an achievement, whose glory at all equalled the splendour of the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo." The motions were agreed to *nem. dis*

But this was not the only form in which the gratitude of his countrymen towards the Earl of Wellington was expressed. A message from the Prince Regent was sent down to the House of Commons, recommending the grant of an annuity to this illustrious officer; and upon moving the resolution upon this message, Mr Perceval spoke in the following terms:—" I cannot think that it will be necessary for me to trouble the committee with many observations in order to induce them to give their most cordial consent to the resolution which I shall have the honour to propose, in conformity to the gracious message of his royal highness the Prince Regent. It is, indeed, impossible that the House of Commons should fail to recollect, or that the nation at large should fail duly to appreciate, the various great and distinguished services which have marked the brilliant career of my Lord Wellington in the course of the late campaigns in Spain and Portugal. Although differences of opinion may exist with respect to the expediency and policy of the efforts which Great Britain has been, and is now making in the peninsula, I am persuaded, sir, that those differences of opinion will form no ground of dissent from the present motion. The question before us is, whether the officer selected in the first instance by his majesty, and subsequently confirmed by his royal highness the Prince Regent, to direct the military operations in the peninsula, has, or has not, conducted himself with such distinguished zeal, and such consummate professional ability, as, while it does infinite honour to himself, does infinite honour to the country, whose armies he was appointed to command? Sir, the impression of the House on this subject is evident; and, under such an impression, I feel that it would be a gratuitous trespass on their time, to enter into any detail of those various achievements of the gallant earl, which have on former occasions received the distinct and repeated approbation of parliament. The circumstances under which his royal highness the Prince Regent has, for the last twelve months, exercised the royal authority, have prevented him at an earlier period from adequately marking the high sense which he entertained of the merits of that disinguished general. His royal highness, however, has availed himself of the first opportunity of conferring on Lord Wellington the honours which are so justly his due. It is a singular coincidence, that as the services of the gallant earl were the latest object of reward to the royal authority, which for the last year has been in abeyance, so they are the first object of reward to the illustrious personage who has assumed the unrestricted exercise of that authority. Our own conviction of the merits of Lord

Wellington is well known. But the committee will observe that Great Britain does not stand single in the opinion which she entertains of his deserts. They have been the uniform theme of the applause of our allies, an applause peculiarly manifested at the close of the last distinguished operation in which Lord Wellington was engaged; for when the tidings of that great victory reached the Spanish government, they marked their sense of its value by a signal and honourable stamp of their high approbation. To the merit of this service indeed the recent dispatches of the enemy themselves afford ample testimony. Those dispatches declare that the occurrence appears incomprehensible. In the first instance, the French general speaks of the great importance of the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo, and boasts of the preparations which he has made to relieve it, holding out to his master expectations of the most glorious result to the French arms. But when he subsequently learns that this fortress, which he had calculated that it would take nine or ten days to subdue, was reduced in as many minutes, astonishment and dismay took the place of confidence and elation.—Sir, I am convinced that the committee will unanimously agree with me, that we have but one duty to perform on the present occasion, and that is, to adopt the recommendation of his royal highness the Prince Regent, with respect to the proposed grant to the Earl of Wellington, for the purpose of enabling him to support the dignity which has been so richly earned, and so promptly conferred. I therefore move, 'That it is the opinion of this committee, that the annual sum of 2,000l. net, be granted to his majesty out of the consolidated fund of Great Britain, to enable his majesty to grant the said annuity to General the Earl of Wellington, in addition to the annuity already granted by parliament to the said earl, subject to the same limitations as contained in that grant, in consideration of the eminent and signal services performed by him in the course of a long series of distinguished exploits in the campaigns in Spain and Portugal."

Mr Canning declared, "that had he anticipated any possible difference of opinion on the motion before the committee, it would have been on the amount of the grant, which, in compliance with the gracious message of the Prince Regent, it was proposed to make to the noble and gallant earl who was the just object of his royal highness's favour and recommendation. In this view of the subject, had a suggestion to increase the grant been reduced to a formal proposition, he should certainly have voted for it, had he not been withheld by the wish that such a question should pass the House with unanimity. He did not pretend to be capable of judging with the skill of a tactician the conduct of military men and military measures, but it was impossible for any man, however ignorant of military affairs, to look at what had been, and what was—to consider the former and the present state of the peninsula—to recollect the existing feelings of the country, and those feelings when that eminent and distinguished commander, Lord Wellington, was appointed to direct the energies of the British army, without paying him that homage of applause which his unrivalled talents and unwearied exertions so loudly demanded."—Some opposition had been made to the proposed grant on account of the distresses of the country. "Good God!" exclaimed Mr Canning, "let the state of commerce and manufactures be what they may, and no man laments the depression which they suffer more than myself, is this a period when Englishmen are to be advised—not to purchase military glory, for that is already our own—but to ab-

stain from expressing gratitude for such services as Lord Wellington has performed, because, forsooth, there is a class of the community whose distresses we pity—whose distresses we would most willingly relieve—but whose distresses, I believe from my soul, would be infinitely aggravated, if, by listening to such suggestions, we were to consent to degrade the national character.—He declared that he looked upon Lord Wellington as a pre-eminently able and successful commander. Let the committee recollect that Lord Wellington was sent out to save Portugal, at a moment when Portugal was in extreme danger, and that at the present moment there was no question with respect to her safety. Let the committee recollect, that when Lord Wellington was sent out to endeavour to save Portugal, he was empowered after that first service to extend his exertions to Spain, then in a state approaching to desperation, and that after having performed that first service in Portugal, the noble and gallant lord did extend, and successfully extend, his operations to Spain. To the one country he had given salvation—to the other hope. When such homage had been paid to this distinguished individual by the countries which he had so essentially assisted, was it becoming in his own country to doubt his deserts? For his part, he could not persuade himself that there was a man in the House of Commons, who, when he saw that the first act of those prerogatives which had lain dormant so long, (how properly he would not now argue) was to mark with distinguished honour the individual whom, by a singular and illustrious coincidence, it was the last act of those prerogatives to mark with distinguished honour, would hesitate to hail with joy the opportunity afforded him of sharing in that general sentiment of applause and gratitude which pervaded the whole community. What had been the conduct of the countries who had the most immediate means of ascertaining his merits? In addition to the title of Conde de Vimiera, conferred on him in Portugal, a revenue of 5,000l. a year had been granted him. As captain-general of Spain, Lord Wellington had a salary offered to him of 5,000l. a year; and as marshal of Portugal, 7,000l. a year. These sums, amounting to 17,000l. a year, were granted for services by the foreign countries in which those services had been performed. These rewards, however, offered by foreign gratitude, were declined by the distinguished person on whom they were bestowed. "No," said that truly noble lord, "in the present situation of Spain and Portugal I will not receive these rewards. I have only done my duty to my country; and to my country alone I will look for recompense." From the vote of this night no fair inference could be drawn either in approval or disapproval of the war; the two subjects were entirely separate and unconnected. But, guarding himself from being supposed to ground the vote which he should give on that consideration, he might, perhaps, be permitted to say, that the last achievement of the noble and gallant earl, whatever might be its military merit, would have a moral effect, which, at the present critical moment, must operate most powerfully throughout the peninsula, by preventing those dazzling consequences which the glories of a rival general might otherwise occasion. It was an event happy and auspicious, and he was persuaded that it would be difficult to find its parallel in military history, out-running as it did, not more the sober expectations of those who were friends to its successful termination, than the fears of a provident ene

my. With respect to the cause of Spain, of that cause he did by no means despair. On the contrary, he thought there were some recent circumstances, and more particularly the renovation and re-invigoration of the Spanish government, which held out a brighter hope than any which could hitherto have been cherished, which called upon the British government not to contract, but to extend their operations, and which not merely justified them for the exertions which they had hitherto made, but reflected on their efforts the highest commendation.—He repeated his wish, that the sum to be granted to the noble and gallant earl were larger. It was far from being adequate to the extent of his services, more especially when it was considered how much he had had in his power, and how much he had rejected; but being anxious to avoid any thing like dissent on such a question, he would not press the adoption of a larger sum. He was sure, however, that the committee would cheerfully and unanimously join with his royal highness the Prince Regent in the noblest exercise of the regal prerogatives, by evincing the gratitude of the country to a distinguished individual who had rendered himself an honour to the present age, and an example to posterity."

An event of considerable importance to the Spanish cause occurred about this period. The Spanish government, hitherto so weak and inefficient, was changed; a new executive was established, and the Duke del Infantado was placed at the head of it. The duke and his colleagues were distinguished by their warm attachment to Great Britain, and by their zeal and patriotism in the cause of their unhappy country; sanguine hopes were, therefore entertained of the benefits which would result from this revolution. Every one had seen with regret that there had been hitherto neither energy nor decision in the Spanish government. The minds of its chiefs did not seem to have risen to the magnitude of the crisis, and while the Spanish nation was full of patriotism and vigour and courage, bearing, and ready to bear, any thing rather than submit to the invader, they alone appeared tame, unanimated spectators of the struggle. A new era, however, arrived, and brighter prospects began to open.

On a motion respecting the usual subsidy to Portugal, a short discussion occurred in the House of Commons, in which the character and services of the Portugueze, and the prospects of the war after the late brilliant events, were alluded to.

The Prince Regent's message respecting Portugal having been referred to a committee of supply, Lord Castlereagh rose and said, "that in submitting to the House a motion on the subject, he did not feel that it would be necessary for him to trespass on their patience at any considerable length, or to adduce many arguments to shew the expediency of affording that assistance to Portugal at the present moment, which had been sanctioned by the approbation of parliament at former periods, when the advantages attendant upon it were by no means equally evident. Indeed, the question appeared to him to be drawn into such a narrow compass, that it was scarcely possible for any one to doubt the principle of expediency on which the proposed grant rested, unless one of the following propositions were affirmed, viz. that it was so fundamentally wrong to subsidize any foreign power, that no application of that nature ought to be made to parliament; or that the state of the war in the peninsula was such, that, notwithstanding the treaties by which the two countries were so closely united, notwithstanding the glorious successes

of our arms, and notwithstanding the solemn faith which parliament had so repeatedly pledged on the subject, no further exertion should be made by Great Britain, but that Spain and Portugal should be left to the dreadful fate which awaited them. Unless one of these two grounds was taken, he confessed himself wholly at a loss to conceive how the present proposition could be opposed. It was far from his wish to reagitate those topics which at former periods had given rise to such controversy. It was unnecessary to recur to them in order to sustain the motion with which he should conclude. Nor would it be politic to recur to them; for he was persuaded, that if the committee should agree with him in thinking, that the same pecuniary support ought to be extended to Portugal as was given in the last session, they would also agree with him in thinking that it ought to be done with as much unanimity as possible; for whatever differences of opinion might have existed in parliament at a time when the experiment of assisting Portugal had not been tried, now that it had been tried, and proved successful, he trusted that a general disposition would ultimately be manifested to mark, by an unanimous vote, the approbation with which the British parliament regarded the Portugueze in the common cause, and the fidelity which they had manifested under those numerous circumstances of extreme peril and difficulty, to which the various fortunes of the war had necessarily exposed them. Without, therefore, dwelling at any length on the topics to which he had alluded, he would just call to the recollection of the committee, that when the principle of the present proposition was broached two years ago, a great disposition existed in parliament to doubt whether any military exertions, which it might lend occasionally to Portugal, could be ultimately successful. Many gentlemen of high military character seemed inclined to believe that the Portugueze army, which it was the object of that proposition to raise and subsidize, could never be brought into such a state of discipline, as to render it efficiently serviceable. The division, on that occasion, exhibited a strong feeling in the minds of a great number of honourable gentlemen, that the encouragement, in a military point of view, held out by the proposition, was by no means adequate to the expence of it. Those, however, who enjoyed more intimate means of judging of the probable result, pressed the vote upon the House; it was passed; and in the course of the year the efforts made in Portugal in consequence, were such, that in the next session of parliament, even those who had opposed the proposition in the first instance, candidly allowed that it had been productive of the most advantageous results. Accordingly, when the proposition was again brought forward, those who had voted against it in the first instance, abstained from a repetition of that vote; representing, however, at the same time, that although they admitted that the measure had produced great advantage, yet that, after all, the efforts of the combined British and Portugueze armies had ended only in shutting them up in the lines of Cintra, and leaving the enemy in possession of the remainder of Portugal. At least the committee would feel that this obstacle to an unanimous expression of sentiment was removed; for the vote of the last session had enabled Lord Wellington to drive the enemy over the frontier, and expel them wholly from Portugal. Parliament, therefore, was now called upon to contemplate a system, not which might lead, but which actually had led, to the most brilliant success. The committee, in coming to the consideration of

the present resolution, would be divested of all those difficulties which had heretofore existed on the subject. He would, however, make a few observations on the principle upon which the present proposition rested. If ever there was a question of subsidy which could be maintained on sound, legitimate, and justifiable grounds, it was this. In the first place, it was subsidizing a power with which we were connected by a kind of natural feeling. Indeed, it could hardly be considered in the light of a subsidy; for the measure afforded such effectual aid to the British army, charged as that army was with important operations, comprehending our own essential interests, that the money might with propriety be voted on that view of the subject alone, and without any particular reference to Portugal; for it was impossible not to admit, that all those splendid exertions of Lord Wellington would have fallen very far short of their existing extent, had that noble lord been deprived of the support of that part of the army which had arisen out of the liberal policy on which the present proposition was founded. That such was the true character of the Portugueze army was felt by the enemy at Busaco, who considered it as British, and attributed it to Lord Wellington as a stratagem of war, that, for the purpose of alluring an attack, he had clothed the British soldiers in the Portugueze uniform. Another ground for granting this sum was, that it would be applied and administered under the inspection of British officers. Never had any subsidy been afforded, for the faithful application of which such complete security existed as this to the government of Portugal. There was another view to be taken of the subject. This was not money granted to Portugal in exoneration of any charges which she might fairly be expected to bear herself. The government of Great Britain had frequently on former occasions been accused of thus unnecessarily subsidizing foreign powers. But this remark was not applicable to Portugal. It was a satisfactory and interesting fact, and one which he was sure the committee would learn with pleasure, that such had been the financial exertions of Portugal, that at the present moment, after all the efforts of the war, after the country had been in the temporary possession of the enemy, and had been drained even by that temporary possession, the revenue of Portugal, applicable to the prosecution of the war, was at a higher point than before the commencement of the contest. The Portugueze government was in the actual collection of a great revenue, and cherished hopes that by measures now in progress, that revenue would be considerably increased. They came to the British parliament only to assist them in making those exertions adequate to the great cause in which the two countries were so deeply interested. On the whole, therefore, he trusted, that although there might be ground for doubting the expediency of such a proposition as the present, when originally made, yet as the experience of the two last years had completely disproved the soundness of those apprehensions, the committee would, by an unanimous decision, mark the feeling of respect which they entertained for the exertions and for the fidelity of Portugal; for it was a proud circumstance for that country, that when it was overrun for a time by the enemy—when the British army, actuated by motives of profound military policy, retired to Torres Vedras, that they might again advance with greater effect—the faith of the Portugueze remained inviolate; there was not the most momentary ad-

herence on their part to the enemy; they submitted to all the military inflictions which their firmness occasioned; they bore the devastation of their country without repining; and in no single instance were they false to the common interest." The noble lord concluded by moving the following resolution:—"That it is the opinion of this committee, that a sum, not exceeding two millions, be granted to his majesty, to enable him to continue to maintain in his pay a body of Portugueze troops, and to give such further aid and assistance to the government of Portugal, as the nature of the contest in which his majesty is engaged may appear to him to require."

Mr Freemantle was almost the only member who opposed this grant. He "denied that the noble lord had satisfied his mind with respect to the propriety of the proposed grant. The noble lord had adverted not to the general state of the war, but to the particular state of Portugal. To all that the noble lord had said in praise of the exertions of Portugal he heartily subscribed. But he could not allow an additional burden of two millions to be imposed upon the country, without bringing back to the recollection of the committee the original object, for the attainment of which this grant was in the first instance voted. That object had failed; and therefore to continue such grants, was merely to persevere in a system of lavish expenditure, from which no satisfactory result could be expected. When the first grant of this nature was proposed, it was to afford British aid towards rescuing Spain from the gripe of France. At that time he concurred most cordially with the whole country in the effort. But four years have elapsed, and not an inch of ground having been gained, he had a right to alter his opinion on the subject. So far were we from having emancipated Spain, that we had not a single man there, nor could we entertain a rational prospect of making any impression on the enemy in that quarter. He put it to the committee, whether if four years ago the merely remaining in Portugal had been described as the ultimate object of our efforts, the proposition to make those efforts would have been received with that acclamation and support which actually accompanied it? In objecting to the present motion, he felt that he trod on ground not most popular just then, of course he should have to contend with the gentlemen opposite; he should also have to contend with many with whom he was in the general habit of political accordance. But so strong was his conviction on the subject, that he felt it imperative upon him to express his opinion. He had patiently listened to every argument and opinion connected with it, both in parliament and in private society, but hitherto no one had been able to persuade him that, under the present circumstances, Great Britain ought to persevere in a system so lavish, that it must eventually lead to her utter destruction. It was on the ground of expence that he argued against the motion. We had failed in every effort which we had made to drive the enemy from Spain. We had failed, not from any want of courage in our troops, not from any want of skill in our officers, but from a want of co-operation on the part of the Spaniards, from a want of that assistance which we expected from them, and which we had a right to expect. In the present state of the committee he would not enter into any details of the war in the peninsula; but he would implore them to pause before they fruitlessly expended two millions of the public money. Let them consider, that two millions was near one-sixth of the pro-

duce of the Income Tax. Let them look at the enormous expenditure of the country, and endeavour to devise the means of diminishing, rather than augmenting it The present annual expenditure of Great Britain amounted to nearly 100,000,000! He would defy any minister to maintain the present expenditure of the country, with sources so diminished, and trade and commerce so circumstanced. He need only refer the right honourable gentleman to what he had stated last year, when proposing a subsidy for Portugal—when at the same time there was a petition from the manufacturers, complaining of the decay of trade, and praying some relief. On that occasion, the right honourable gentleman had said, that it was impossible to afford the relief prayed for, until Buonaparte had altered his prohibitory decrees. Since then the ruler of France had increased them, and, therefore, the situation of the country in that respect was worse. Under these circumstances he should most earnestly recommend to the House to adopt economy—to diminish the expenditure, and make it more commensurate with the means of the country. The noble lord had stated that the revenue of Portugal was materially improved since the former subsidy was voted by parliament. If so, she had no right whatever to call upon Great Britain for further aid; the increase of the revenue of Portugal ought to be applied to the maintenance of her army, especially as our revenue was on the decline. If England was menaced with a foreign invasion, would Englishmen, he would ask, condescend to receive pay for carrying muskets in defence of their liberties and of their country? The fact was so with the Portugueze, for the subsidy was granted for the express purpose of assisting them in defence of their own country. He would state a few facts in detail of the expences of our army in that quarter. At this moment, it must be admitted on all hands, that the extent of it was not under 50,000 men at least available for service—the expence of the establishment of mules employed in carrying stores, &c. was not less than 4,000*l.* per diem, and this he could prove, if necessary. Each horse cost this country 5*s.* per day, beside the provisions for the cavalry, which were imported from America into Lisbon, and thence transported to the army, and their horses were expected to be furnished from this country. The expence of transporting the heavy ordnance from Oporto to Ciudad Rodrigo cost this country 20,000*l.* With respect to keeping up the force we had in the peninsula, our means were not adequate to the effort, for the militia regiments were called on to supply their quotas for the line, and many of the militia regiments were not complete, for some of the counties could not afford a ballot. There was no chance therefore of deriving assistance again from that source. It was impracticable to keep up the cavalry regiments; he could affirm, that one regiment, which at the end of the year 1808 was complete, consisting of eight troops, containing 640 men and horses, landed in Portugal, was now reduced, though it had since been recruited five times, to 480 men, and when in the field could not muster more than 400 men. In recommending economy, he did not mean that our armies should be withdrawn, or that at the first charge the country should surrender at discretion. His only object was to induce the House to look at the situation of this country, and by its conduct prevent the furtherance of what he must deem a ruinous system, carried on in a country where so fair a prospect was not now presented as at the commencement of the contest. He therefore could not avoid

recommending the adoption of measures more conducive to the security of the empire, and upon a scale more consistent with its resources."

The Honourable Mr Ward, although connected with the opposition, came forward on this occasion, and made a satisfactory reply to the preceding speaker. He observed, "That he was one of those who originally thought that we should not have entered as principals into the war in the peninsula; he still thought so, but he conceived that there was a great difference between such an opinion and that which he might entertain after that war had been so commenced, and continued for years. Whether they should have entered into it on the scale they had done, and whether they should now abandon it, were quite different questions; for the policy of abandoning it might be a great deal worse than the policy which induced us to commence it. He could not agree with his honourable friend who spoke last; for in the system which he recommended, though he said he would not abandon the war, yet his opinions would lead him to starve it. That would, indeed, be carrying on the war so as to be burdensome, while at the same time it afforded no probability of succeeding in any one object of it. Though he still thought it would have been wiser to have acted differently, yet it should be recollected, that there was nothing so disgraceful to the character of a great nation as a changeable vacillating policy. It often happened in the concerns of nations, that it was better to pursue a course which was not in the first instance rightly selected, than to give it up altogether, after following it for a considerable time. If we now abandoned it, or did what was almost the same thing, starve it, and if we thus suffered the French to gain nearly all their objects, what would any statesman say—what would all Europe say to our conduct? They might say that when we were unsuccessful,—when we were defeated in our objects,—when our gallant general was slain, then we were disposed to continue the war; but that now, when we had obtained brilliant successes,—when we had secured our position in the peninsula,—when our armies were commanded by one of the greatest generals of modern times; now, a new light had broken in upon us; now, we found that we could not afford to continue the means of farther success; now, we felt ourselves indisposed to grant the necessary succours to our allies! His honourable friend thought it discreditable to the Portugueze character to be paid by England. But what was the fact? The Portugueze had first done all that was in their power, and then they received our assistance to make still greater efforts. His honourable friend said, that we, in England, would not think of being paid by another nation for defending ourselves. God forbid that such an event should ever happen as to drive us to a question of such a nature! Should the necessity of defending ourselves in our own land occur, we should, doubtless, perform all that lay within the compass of our own ability; and he trusted that we should feel no necessity to resort to the supplies of other governments. But really he could discern nothing disgraceful in the conduct of the Portugueze, who, without the financial means of exerting all their powers, and calling forth all their own resources, received the pecuniary assistance of their allies in a common cause. What they had done, had been the practice of some of the greatest states in Europe; several instances of which, he imagined, his honourable friend approved of. What

had been the case respecting our allies during the whole of the war for near twenty years? Was it ever said, that the emperor of Germany was a disgraced person because he accepted pecuniary loans and subsidies from this country, to enable him to send his armies into the field? But if affording pecuniary aid to Portugal were expedient, and justifiable on the score of policy, it was yet much more so at present, on the ground of honour. In fact, we were pledged as strongly as we could be to assist Portugal; and she had done nothing lately to forfeit the fulfilment of our promises of support; he meant not that hollow, niggardly, illusive support that some recommended; but a real, efficient, and vigorous assistance. With regard to Spain, he thought that if she had ever deserved our aid, she deserved it peculiarly at the present time; for she had lately endeavoured to increase her own means of resistance, especially in her abolition of a weak and execrable government. He was not, however, disposed to deny that the time might come, when this question would appear under a very different aspect,—when we might find ourselves pressed by domestic difficulties, which would render it advisable to husband our resources with the utmost economy; and he would fairly own, that he was not altogether free from apprehensions on that subject. The time might possibly arrive sooner than most persons expected. Yet he must maintain upon every consideration, whether of national policy, or of public honour, that if we should deem it proper to abandon the vigorous prosecution of the war in the peninsula, we ought to do so slowly and reluctantly. Such a measure ought, in his mind, to be the result only of well weighing, and duly estimating whether we were really unable to persevere in that war. We ought to look around us carefully, and examine what other branch of expenditure we could retrench or give up, rather than for the sake of the cost to abandon the defence of our allies. Thus much he felt himself bound to say, because he certainly thought, and had before said, that in the commencement, it would have been better policy for us not to commit ourselves so far, as principals in the war. But when he heard gentlemen argue in favour of stopping the career in which we had been engaged for several years, and to which we were now so strongly pledged, he must declare, that he could not hear such sentiments without stating, as he had done, his opinion on the present occasion as to the policy and honour of this country."

But it is time to return to the operations of the armies.—So soon as Lord Wellington had repaired the works of Ciudad Rodrigo, and perceived that Marmont had abandoned his intention of fighting, he moved the greater part of his army towards Badajoz, which he determined should follow the fate of Ciudad Rodrigo. This place had for some time been blockaded by General Hill, with about 12,000 men, supported by the Portugueze army under Marshal Beresford.—The force now at the disposal of the British commander was formidable; the enemy's armies of the north and south were entirely separated; and it was probable the operations of this important siege might be carried on without interruption. It was only by the union of all their forces that the French could venture on any attempt to relieve it; and Lord Wellington therefore determined to improve the opportunity which so favourable a conjuncture presented. He resolved to push the siege with the greatest vigour; he knew the vast im-

portance of this place to his future operations; and although he was sensible that the resistance of a numerous garrison, commanded by one of the most able engineers in the French service, and entrenched behind works which his skill had contrived, threatened a severe loss to the assailants, he wisely reflected that this loss would still be inferior to that which his army must sustain in conducting the siege and fighting a general battle at the same time. The event amply proved the sagacity which guided his determination.

He directed the operations of the siege in person. By the middle of March, Badajoz was completely invested, the first parallel having been formed within 200 yards of the outwork called La Picorina. General Sir Thomas Graham moved on Santa Martha; Sir Rowland Hill proceeded to Merida, and compelled Drouet to retire. Generals Graham and Hill were without interruption allowed to occupy the whole line formerly held by Drouet, and thus effectually to separate Marmont and Soult for the present.—On the 19th of March the garrison made a sortie against the right of the British works, but were instantly repulsed with considerable loss by Major General Bowes. On the 25th the besiegers fired into the place at a distance of about 200 yards; and on the very same day carried Fort Picorina by storm, and put the garrison to the sword.—The progress which had thus been made was unexampled in the history of sieges. By the 6th of April no less than three breaches had been made, which were considered practicable; and the storming of the place was immediately determined on. Lieutenant-General Picton, with the third division, was ordered to attack the castle of Badajoz by escalade. Major Wilson, with a detachment from the fourth division, was to assail the ravelin of St Rocque. Major General Colville, with the remainder of the fourth, and the light division, was to attack the bastions of La Trinedad and Santa Martha. The conduct of a false attack was committed to Lieutenant-General Leith, with instructions to turn it into a real one should circumstances prove favourable.

About ten o'clock in the evening of the 6th of April, Lieutenant-General Picton set out on his arduous enterprise He crossed the river after some resistance, and in the short space of an hour and a half was master of the castle of Badajoz. Major Wilson, with 200 men, carried the ravelin of St Rocque; but the resistance which the light division met with was more serious. They advanced to the covered way, descended into the ditch, and proceeded to storm the breaches; but such were the obstacles of all kinds which the contrivance of the enemy had thrown in the way, that although the assault was often resumed, they were unable to establish themselves in the place The false attack, however, under General Leith, was converted into a real one; and the besiegers having entirely succeeded at all other points, the light division was drawn off. Both the castle and the town were in possession of the British. The French governor, with his staff, retired into Fort St Christoval, and surrendered on the following day. The garrison, which amounted originally to 5000 men, had lost 1200 killed and wounded in the previous operations, besides those who perished in the assault. The British and Portugueze sustained a loss of about 809 killed and 2000 wounded; a loss which might be thought considerable, if the value of the service, and the rapidity of the operations, were not fairly estimated.—Thus had the British army, in the short space of one month, re-

duced a great fortress, improved by all the resources of art, and defended by a strong garrison. The French, with great difficulty, wrested it from the Spaniards even when nothing had been done to strengthen the works, and when the besieged were under the guidance of a man remarkable both for his folly and cowardice.

This astonishing exploit was, like the former, rewarded by the thanks of parliament. The able and perspicuous oration of the Earl of Liverpool, on moving a vote of thanks in the House of Peers, deserves to be recorded as an admirable comment on this great achievement.

The Earl of Liverpool, in calling their lordships' attention to this gallant exploit, said, "It was hardly necessary for him to observe, that the operation combined in itself the two circumstances which had always been considered as constituting the best title to the honour of their lordships' thanks,—first, the importance of the object, and next, the magnitude of the effort If they looked at the military history of Badajoz in this as well as in former wars in the peninsula, they would find, that, situated on the south west frontier of Spain, this fortress had always been regarded as an object of primary importance. In former wars it had stood many severe sieges; and it was somewhat singular, that the efforts then made to reduce it had never been successful. In the year 1658, when the struggle for Portuguese independence took place, this fortress was deemed an important object for the Portugueze, and it was accordingly attacked with vigour. The Portuguese were more than four months in prosecuting the siege—they lost half their army,—and, after all, the attempt proved unavailing, and the enterprise was abandoned. In the war of 1705, generally known by the name of the Succession War, Badajoz was besieged by the English, Dutch, and Portuguese troops, under the command of an ancestor of a noble lord whom he had in his eye. A most gallant effort was made on that occasion; and had it not been for particular circumstances, it would in all probability have been successful; but in fourteen days from the opening of the trenches, the attempt was unavoidably given up as hopeless. In the course of the present war in the peninsula, also, Badajoz had been considered as an object of the greatest military importance. Their lordships might remember, that in the early part of the last year, the place was attacked by the French under the command of Marshal Soult. They broke ground on the 3d February, and met with a most gallant resistance on the part of the governor and the troops under his command. The resistance would, in all probability, have been effectual, or the capture of the place would have at least been so long delayed, as to have contributed essentially to ultimate success in the contest, had not the governor most unfortunately died early in the month of March; and whether from the misconduct of his successor, or from some more serious cause, on the 11th of March the fortress capitulated. But even here it was to be observed, that the French under the able, experienced leader whom he had mentioned, had not made themselves masters of the place till after a siege of thirty-six days. At a subsequent period, their lordships knew Badajoz had been attacked by Lord Wellington when the French collected their troops from all quarters of the peninsula. Their northern army, which they called the army of Portugal, the southern army, the troops employed in the eastern parts of the peninsula, and detachments from the garrison of Madrid, all assembled to force the allied army to raise the siege, or risk a

general battle for the protection of its operations. With such a force advancing against him, Lord Wellington did not feel it prudent to continue the siege and give battle to the enemy at the same time; and therefore, with the greatest judgment and propriety, resolved to abandon the place. The siege could not then have been renewed till the month of June, a season of the year when, from the unhealthiness of that part of the country, the operations could not have been carried on without great loss.

"In the present year, after the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, Lord Wellington determined with the first opportunity to direct his efforts against Badajoz. It was fairly to be contemplated, that the French would do every thing in their power to obstruct these sieges; and, therefore, it was an object of the utmost importance to get possession of the fortresses in as short a time as possible from the commencement of the operations. Their lordships had already had an opportunity of expressing their opinion upon the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. That place had been taken with a rapidity altogether unparalleled, and utterly astonishing even to the enemy, whose commander had calculated that he would have been in time enough for its relief, if he arrived there at a period, which turned out to be nine or ten days subsequent to the date of its capture. The exertions made in the siege of Badajoz were not less extraordinary than those which distinguished the attacks upon Ciudad Rodrigo. Their lordships had seen the proofs of the strenuous resistance made on that occasion,—of the difficulties encountered in the course of the siege; but, notwithstanding every opposition, in twelve days from the opening of the trenches, the place was in the possession of the British army. In looking at the circumstances attending this noble effort, it was impossible for any heart not to feel a glow of admiration at the skill and decision of the commander, and the gallantry of the officers and troops. The conduct of General Picton had inspired a confidence in the army, and exhibited an example of science and bravery, which had been surpassed by no other officer. His exertions in the attack on the 6th could not fail to excite the most lively feelings of admiration. It appeared that three practicable breaches had been made, that the enemy had expected the attack to be made by these breaches, and had employed every imaginable means for effectual resistance. That resistance (he had this from an eye-witness) was one of the most formidable efforts that had perhaps ever been made in any war. Their lordships, indeed, might judge of the nature of that effort, when they considered its effect upon troops certainly not liable to be deterred by difficulties in the execution of any hazardous enterprize, whatever might be the obstacles to be surmounted. On the one hand, General Picton, and on the other General Walker, had succeeded by escalade, at the extremities of the place. It was impossible to contemplate without admiration, the conduct of the latter attack, which was only designed as a feint at first, to be turned into a real attack afterwards, if circumstances should allow. That division had got into the fortress by escalade, where there was no breach, and in the face of a strong bastion. It was impossible to contemplate this occurrence without feeling it due to General Walker to say,—and a higher praise could not well be bestowed,—that his conduct had sustained the reputation which he had acquired on former occasions. He hoped he would live to give his country the benefit of those farther services which he had proved himself so capable of render-

ing. This was the officer who had distinguished himself so highly at the battle of Vimiera, where he commanded the 50th regiment, and manœuvred it in such a manner as to defeat the efforts of a body of the enemy five times the number of his own troops. So conspicuous had been his merit on that occasion, that the French general who was then taken, without knowing who General Walker was, earnestly desired to be introduced to him, stating that he had done what he had never seen done before in any battle. He thought it due to General Walker to advert to this circumstance, and he had only farther to say, that the vigour, promptitude, and spirit, which this excellent officer had displayed at Vimiera, were at least equalled by his conduct in the attack of Badajoz. It would be in vain to attempt to particularize the conduct of other officers where all had so eminently distinguished themselves. The public dispatches must have apprised their lordships of the gallant conduct of Generals Colville, Kempt, Bowes, and the other officers concerned in this gallant enterprize. There was one circumstance, however, which he must not omit to mention, as it was worthy of particular observation. It happened, that, owing to the indisposition of some other officers, the command of a most important division of the troops, the light division, fell upon a young officer, not above the rank of lieutenant colonel. This was Colonel Barnard, whose conduct had been spoken of with the admiration which it deserved. He was induced by several considerations to advert to this circumstance. He mentioned it because he had the honour to know this gallant officer, and was proud that he had had an opportunity of so highly distinguishing himself. But he mentioned it chiefly with another and more important view,—that of calling their lordships' attention to the race of young officers that were rising under the auspices and command of the distinguished leader of the combined armies. Here was a body of officers forming under Lord Wellington, which would constitute a shield of strength, such as had, perhaps, never before existed in any other country, or indeed in this, on any former occasion. Having said thus much of the gallant exploit for which he called for their lordships' thanks, and of the merits of those concerned in it, he felt it impossible not to touch on the loss which our army had sustained. On that subject there could be but one feeling in the House, and in the country at large. But he hoped the friends and relatives of those who so gloriously fell would derive consolation from the fame of the illustrious dead; from the reflection that they had had performed the most eminent service to their country, and that if they had fallen, they fell not in vain. They had died in a glorious cause, under a commander who was regarded by the army with the most enthusiastic admiration, and in the discharge of a duty the most essential for promoting the farther success of the war. In looking at this part of the subject as a parliament and a nation, they must have observed, that there was no point of Lord Wellington's conduct more remarkable than his anxiety on all occasions to spare the lives of the men under his command as much as possible. He had had an opportunity of knowing more fully than most others, that it was the ruling principle of his conduct, never to endeavour to gain by a battle that which he could gain without it. This was a proper principle on all occasions, and under all circumstances; but more particularly with regard to this country. Their lordships had seen how perseveringly Lord Wellington had acted on this principle in the operations at Torres Vedras. His language

then was this,—" I have an opportunity of attacking the enemy with a full confidence of success; but I think I can accomplish my purpose without it, and therefore I shall not expose the lives of my men to unnecessary hazard." On other occasions Lord Wellington had acted on the same principle. The attainment of the present object had been indeed attended with great loss to the British army; but it ought to be recollected, that nothing was more to be avoided than a protracted operation; and even with a view to the preservation of the lives of the soldiers, as well as to the ultimate success of the war, the attack upon Badajoz ought to be considered as a most judicious enterprize. The loss ought to be compared with the magnitude of the object; and in this view it would be found to be less in the present instance than in many operations at the most distinguished period of our military history. If their lordships would look at the operations under the Duke of Marlborough, they would find that at the siege of Lisle the allied armies had lost 12,000 men; at the siege of Douay, 8000; at the siege of Aire, 7000 men; and at the siege of Toulon, where they failed, 13,000 men. The loss in an attack such as that on Badajoz might indeed be severe; but, however much to be regretted, it must be regarded as in all probability less than that of a protracted siege. There was one other point to which he was desirous of calling their lordships' attention before he concluded. Their lordships must have observed with peculiar satisfaction, that the military operations of this country had, within these few years, assumed an entirely new character. This he said without by any means undervaluing its efforts in former wars; but such was now the state of the world, that in addition to strength and resources, a nation, in order to be secure, must combine with that strength all the advantages of art and science. The operation now under consideration could not fail to suggest the remarks which he had just made. On all occasions, indeed, British troops had shewn the most distinguished and pre-eminent valour in the field, but in the course of the last century they had been but little accustomed to the science of attack upon fortified places. If they had still been defective in that species of warfare therefore, we ought not to have been disheartened,—we ought to have known that our soldiers would, from experience, acquire this art if essentially necessary; but we had the satisfaction to find, from the attacks upon Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, that if our troops were the best in Europe in the field, which he supposed none would dispute with us, they were also not less formidable in attacks upon fortified places. It was well known what resistance these places were capable of making, and had made, against other forces; and it was known, also, that before the British army, under Lord Wellington, Ciudad Rodrigo had fallen in eleven days, and Badajoz in twenty. All this must afford peculiar satisfaction to those who looked upon the course of the war in the peninsula as affording the best hopes of ultimate success in the contest. They must feel the high importance of this operation: and even to those who doubted, or thought differently, if any now did so, it must appear a great advantage. They could not but see what strength it afforded for the defence of the country, if the battle were to be fought on our own ground, in the discipline and skill which must be acquired in the course of these operations, by such a British army, under such a leader." He concluded by moving, "The Thanks of the House to the general, the officers, and troops, in the usual manner."—

The motion was of course carried unanimously.

The sagacity of Lord Wellington in pressing the siege of Badajoz with such vigour, now became manifest. Soult was rapidly advancing to the relief of this important fortress; and Marmont, after vainly attempting to carry Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida by a *coup de main*, was marching into the interior of Portugal. The British commander instantly moved forward to check the progress of Soult, but that officer having, on his arrival at Villa Franca, been apprised of the fall of Badajoz, began his retreat. Marmont penetrated as far as Castella Branca, where he also learned the result of the siege, and commenced his retreat so hastily, that he abandoned this place the very same day on which he entered it. He derived no other advantage from his movements than the plunder of one or two provinces; so inglorious had the efforts of the enemy become under the commanding influence of Lord Wellington. Already did they feel the superiority of his genius, and were reduced to the necessity of regulating their movements by his exploits. If he was engaged in a daring enterprise which promised to occupy him for a few weeks, they resumed their activity and advanced; if he was successful, they retreated, and sunk once more into inaction.—Such was the opening of a campaign which was to exhibit events yet more brilliant and astonishing.

The retreat of Soult was precipitate, but he was pursued with great alacrity by the British cavalry under Sir Stapleton Cotton. On the evening of the 11th April, this gallant officer came up with the enemy's rear guard, consisting of 2500 cavalry, at Villa Garcia, on the confines of Estremadura. Major General Le Marchant with his dragoons charged the French with such impetuosity, as to drive them in the utmost confusion upon Llerena, where the main army had retired. On the same day Soult evacuated that place; and the province of Estremadura was thus entirely freed from the presence of the enemy.

While these great operations were going forward, the Guerillas in the north of Spain were not inactive. The French had dared to consider the patriots as traitors, and had committed many acts of wanton cruelty; but an ample retaliation was now to be taken for these excesses. Don Geronimo Merino (commonly called El Cura de Villoviado) a most able and enterprising Guerilla chief, succeeded in making 500 prisoners, including 1 lieutenant-colonel and 11 other officers, after a resistance which cost the enemy 73 killed and 97 wounded. The prisoners immediately suffered in the proportion of 20 for each of the three members of the Junta of Burgos, who had been put to death by the enemy, and in the proportion of 10 for each of Merino's soldiers, who lately shared the same fate This act was accompanied by a declaration that in the same ratio, retaliation would always be observed.—On the 28th, when retiring to Villa Franca with the remainder of his prisoners, Merino took post with a part of his forces at a cross road, where he expected a rescue would be attempted. Being apprised of the advance of the enemy in pursuit of the convoy, he dressed an ambuscade, into which the enemy fell, and there left dead 36 men, besides a considerable number of wounded.

The British commander prepared for prosecuting the ulterior objects of the campaign. Marmont was at Salamanca; Drouet at Aguazel; and Soult at Seville; and Lord Wellington in the first instance directed his efforts to break up entirely the communications betwixt the French armies of Portugal and of the south of Spain.

For this purpose he detached General Hill to destroy the bridge of Almarez across the Tagus, on the eastern frontier of Estremadura, which formed their only remaining line of communication.—General Hill, on his approach, found the bridge strongly protected; both sides of the river were defended with works, which the enemy had thrown up; while the castle and redoubts of Mirabete, situated at a short distance, added much to the difficulties of his enterprise. He determined, however, to carry his object at all hazards; in the expectation that he might arrive at the point of attack before day-light, and take the enemy by surprise, he ordered that the flank column of his army should be provided with ladders, and should attempt the forts by escalade. The extreme badness of the roads prevented him from arriving so soon as he expected; and he therefore resolved to penetrate by the mountain path, leading through the village of Romangordo, although he thus lost the benefit of his artillery. He could not form his columns before day-break; the French were of course fully apprised of his intentions, and opened a heavy fire on the advancing columns; the British disregarded their utmost efforts, and advanced to the assault of the fort which protected the left bank of the river. The works were in a moment escaladed at three different points; the garrison still continued their fire; the British had recourse to the bayonet, and quickly settled the affair. The enemy fled in all directions, and attempted to escape by the bridge; but their comrades on the other side of the river had already destroyed it. Those who escaped destruction by the bayonet perished in the stream; the garrison which occupied Fort Ragusa on the opposite bank were panic-struck, and fled with precipitation towards Naval Moral; and the enterprise of General Hill was crowned with complete success. The British lost in this brilliant affair about 30 killed, and 130 wounded; the loss of the enemy was much greater, exclusive even of the prisoners, who, to the number of 300, fell into the hands of the conquerors.—The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and the destruction of the bridge of Almarez, do immortal honour to the British arms. In these memorable contests the enemy had every advantage of position which nature and art could give him; yet was he subdued in a shorter space than other generals with other troops require to make preparations for the protracted labours of a siege. The French, by their ingenuity in fortifying places which were so soon to be reduced, established the most formidable barriers for the future defence of the peninsula against invasion.'

The bridge of Almarez formed almost the only communication below Toledo, by which a large army could cross the Tagus; and the French generals were of course fully aware of its importance. When Marmont heard of the movements of General Hill, he broke up from Salamanca, and moved to the south east as far as Fort Veras, where he heard of the British successes, and again retired upon Salamanca. Here he employed himself in throwing up additional fortifications; the late events appear to have so much intimidated him, that he thought no works strong enough for the protection of his army.—In all the operations of the French generals, they grossly miscalculated the enterprise of their enemy; they made movements in defence of fortresses which had already fallen, and after a short advance, were uniformly compelled to retrace their steps. Thus did Marmont advance to the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo, when he was astonished by the intelligence, that the British had already reduced it; thus also did Soult move

forward to the relief of Badajoz, when the intelligence reached him at Villa Franca, that it was already in possession of the enemy; and thus did Marmont move tardily to protect the bridge of Almarez, when it was already taken, after which he was obliged to retire, and amuse himself in strengthening the fortifications of Salamanca. These unprofitable movements, which seemed the effect of distraction rather than of system, proved the entire dependence of the French operations on those of their enemies, while they evinced the paramount genius of the British commander.

CHAP. XII.

Progress of the Campaign. The British advance upon Salamanca. They carry by Storm the Forts which the French had constructed in that Place. Marmont retires but on being reinforced, resumes the Offensive. Battle of Salamanca. The British enter Madrid and Valladolid. They besiege Burgos. Causes of the Failure of this Enterprise, and of the subsequent Retreat of the Allies.

EVERY preparation having been made for the advance of the British into Spain, they crossed the Agueda on the 13th June, and on the 16th reached Salamanca It was supposed that Marmont would have attempted to defend this city; but on the advance of the British cavalry, the French troops which had been left before it, retired, and crossed the Tormes.—The enemy had fortified some convents in Salamanca, and had left about 800 men for their defence, with whom Marmont's army still endeavoured to keep up a communication. Major General Clinton, with the sixth division of the British army, was ordered to reduce them, while the rest of the British troops were kept in readiness to oppose the army of Marmont, should it attempt the recapture of the town. This attempt was accordingly made; the French having collected their whole force, moved forward on the 20th, but found Lord Wellington so advantageously posted, that they hesitated about offering battle. They were soon attacked, however, by a division of the army under Sir Thomas Graham, and forced to retire. The enemy still kept up a communication, however, with the forts in Salamanca; but Lord Wellington, by a masterly manœuvre, at last compelled him to abandon them to their fate.—The forts had been finely constructed, and were well defended; they had been established in such a manner as to support each other, and the difficulties which opposed their reduction were very considerable. In one of them, however, a practicable breach was effected; but this fort could not be taken till another which protected it had been reduced; an attempt was therefore made to carry the latter by assault. This enterprise was unsuccessful, and Major General Bowes, a very gallant officer, fell while leading on the storming party —The conduct of this officer was very gallant, and deserves to be remembered. So eager was he for the success of the enterprise for which he had been selected, that he advanced in person at the head of the storming party and was wounded; but no sooner was his wound dressed than he returned to the post of honour, and gloriously perished at the head of his brave soldiers.

The reduction of the forts had hitherto proved a work of greater diffi-

culty than was at first expected; but success was now to crown the efforts of the army. On the 27th of June, a practicable breach was made in one of the principal forts, and at the same time, the other which protected it was discovered to be on fire. The assault was immediately ordered; but before the troops had advanced, a proposal was received from the French governor, offering to capitulate after the lapse of some hours. Lord Wellington was not to be deceived by an offer so insidious; he knew that it had no other object but to gain time for extinguishing the flames; and he returned for answer, that the garrison must surrender immediately. The governor made another trial of artifice; Lord Wellington answered him, by ordering the troops to advance to the assault. So much were they accustomed to enterprises of this character, that they received this order with the utmost joy; advanced with a resistless impetuosity; drove the French before them, and made themselves masters of the fort with very little loss. The governor saw that all further resistance must be vain, and capitulated on the terms which were dictated to him by the British general—For three years had the French been employed in constructing these fortifications; and so strong did they consider them, that they had formed them into a depot for stores of all kinds, which now fell into the hands of the British. Lord Wellington himself, when he examined the forts, is said to have expressed surprise at the rapidity with which they had been carried; and the French marshal was, as usual, filled with astonishment.

Some doubts have been insinuated as to the policy of Lord Wellington, in waiting for the reduction of these forts, by which he was prevented for a time from following up the advantages which he had gained over Marmont. The French marshal, it is said, was at this time separated both from Bonnet, who occupied the Asturias, and from the army of the centre; and the opportunity ought to have been seized of bearing down upon him, before he could receive reinforcements. When supported by the other armies, he once more became superior in numbers to the British, and was enabled to turn upon his pursuers. The great victory which was afterwards gained must be ascribed chiefly, we are told, to the errors committed by the French marshal, at a time when all the chances of war were in his favour; chances which had arisen during the time employed in reducing the forts at Salamanca. These forts could not, even in the most unfavourable circumstances, have offered any considerable obstacle to the British army, and it would have been more prudent, therefore, it has been said, to have left a small force to blockade them, and to have hastened the pursuit of Marmont, while he was in no condition to have offered a serious resistance.—In these speculations, however, it seems to be forgotten, that the forts were found to be much stronger than had been anticipated; that there would have been scarcely any delay in taking them, strong as they were, but for an accidental scarcity of ammunition, which suspended the operations for some days; that the French considered Salamanca, with its forts, as of sufficient importance to induce them to risk a battle in its defence, and that in the condition to which the French armies might have been reduced, the considerable depot established at Salamanca was an object, of which it was important that Lord Wellington should deprive them—But it is time to return from these idle criticisms, to the narration of the events of the campaign.

So soon as the forts were reduced, Lord Wellington put the army in

motion, and Marmont hastily retired across the Douro; destroyed the bridges, and concentrated his forces at Tordesillas. He left his rear-guard at Rueda; Sir Stapleton Cotton, with his cavalry, attacked it with great impetuosity, and drove it in confusion upon the main body. The whole French army immediately took up a strong position on the Douro.

A series of brilliant manœuvres succeeded. Lord Wellington thought it would be imprudent to attack the enemy in his strong position; and instead of advancing upon Valladolid, he threatened the Spanish capital. Marmont, who had been joined by Bonnet, and whose army had thus become superior in numbers to that of his antagonist, determined to undertake offensive operations. He extended his right as far as Toro, repaired the bridge at that place, and ordered a part of his army to cross the river, as if to turn the British left.—He hastily withdrew these troops; made a rapid march with his whole army thirty miles up the river to Tordesillas; crossed at that point, and succeeded in turning the flank of the allied army at Castregon. This brilliant movement threatened for a moment to change the aspect of the campaign; it re-established the communications of the French marshal with Madrid, and enabled the armies of the north and centre of Spain to unite, and bear down with an overwhelming superiority on the British. But Lord Wellington was not to be easily disconcerted; he made arrangements for the retreat and junction of the different divisions of his army, and took up a position, in which he offered battle to the enemy. This Marmont wisely declined; but instead of waiting for the arrival of the reinforcements, which were hastening to his support, he persevered in his manœuvres to turn the British flanks, and incautiously exposed himself to attack. When he perceived that his efforts to turn the left of the British had been counteracted, he made a similar attempt on the opposite flank, which met with the same result. Had he acted wisely, he would have waited till the army of the centre, and the other succours, which were advancing, had given him so decided a superiority, as must have left his adversary no choice in his movements; but, elated as he was by the partial success which for a time had attended his plans, he forgot, or despised, all the ordinary rules of prudence. Lord Wellington was in no condition to hazard a battle unnecessarily; his army was inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, and was but ill supplied with stores and ammunition: although he did not decline an engagement, therefore, neither did he court it. While he provided for the retreat of his own army, he kept a watchful eye on the movements of his adversary; and with that admirable presence of mind, which nothing could confound, he prepared to take advantage of any error which the French marshal might commit. Several days were thus spent in a succession of movements than which modern warfare can boast nothing more brilliant, and neither party appeared to have gained any advantage over the other. It is true, that by threatening the British communications with Portugal, the French had succeeded in accelerating the retreat of their enemy; but it is no less certain, that all the skilful attempts made to turn the British flanks, and to compel Lord Wellington to fight at disadvantage, had proved abortive. By the 21st of July the allied army was concentrated on the Tormes; and on the same day the French also crossed the river, and again appeared to threaten Ciudad Rodrigo.

That great event, so long expected, was now approaching; but a new series of manœuvres was first to be exe-

cuted. The British army occupied a species of peninsula formed by the river; and Marmont seems to have indulged the chimerical hope of inclosing them in this position, and entirely cutting off their retreat. During the 22d and 23d, he executed a variety of movements, with the view of distracting the attention of the British general, and concealing from him his real plans For a while he threatened the British left; but although Lord Wellington had provided for the defence of this wing of his army, he still suspected that Marmont had designs upon the other flank, which he was therefore very careful to support. The French marshal was ambitious of doing too much; he wished to surround the British army, and he extended and weakened his own line. Lord Wellington at once perceived this fatal mistake, and saw that the moment was at last arrived which put the enemy in his power. He had been long anxious to give them battle, and to punish their temerity; they had now afforded him a finer opportunity than he could have anticipated. Arrangements were soon made for the attack; the singular conjuncture admitted of no delay.—Major-General Pakenham, with the third division, began a furious assault on the flanks of the enemy's left, in which he was supported by Brigadier General Bradford's brigade, by the fourth and fifth divisions, and the cavalry under Sir Stapleton Cotton in front. The French, although finely posted, and supported by cannon, were overthrown. Already the victory was decided. General Pack was at first unsuccessful in his attempt to drive the enemy's centre from the hill of the Arapiles; but the victorious fifth division, which had already contributed so much to the rout of the enemy's left, having changed its front, bore down on the centre, and drove it from the hill with precipitation. Generals Beresford and Leith were wounded about this time; but these unlucky accidents did not abate the ardour of the troops. The enemy's right, which had been joined by the fugitives from the other wing, still maintained a shew of resistance; it was at once attacked in front and on its flanks, and driven in confusion from the field.—Thus had the French received a total defeat throughout their line; and nothing but the darkness of the night saved them from destruction. The pursuit was renewed next morning; the French rear-guard was overtaken, attacked, and put to flight, the cavalry leaving the infantry to its fate. Three whole battalions surrendered.—Never was victory more decisive; never did a beaten army exhibit greater marks of consternation; stores, baggage, and ammunition, every thing, in short, which could impede their flight, was left to the conquerors. The carnage on the field of battle, and in the pursuit, was prodigious; and the trophies of the victory corresponded to its importance. Eleven pieces of cannon, two eagles, and six colours, were taken; 5 generals, 3 colonels, 3 lieutenant-colonels, 130 officers of different ranks, and upwards of 7000 soldiers, were made prisoners. Marmont and Bonnet, the first and second in command, were wounded, and the command of the fugitive army devolved upon General Clausel.—The loss of the allies was small in proportion to the greatness of the success; about 700 were killed, and upwards of 4000 wounded. Major-General Le Marchant, a brave and skilful officer, was killed; Lieutenant-Generals Leith and Cole, and Major-General Alten, were wounded. Sir Stapleton Cotton, a very distinguished officer, was singularly unfortunate; he was wounded in the darkness of the night by a British

soldier, who mistook him for an enemy. Happily for his country the wound did not prove fatal.

Thus terminated the battle of Salamanca, which will always be referred to in history as one of the most brilliant achievements of modern times, whether the matchless talents displayed by the British general—the admirable courage of the troops—or the splendid consequences which followed such a combination of heroism and genius, are considered. Let it be remembered, that when the battle was fought, the French were unquestionably superior in numbers to their enemies; that they were under the guidance of one of the first of their marshals, who shewed a splendid genius even amid his misfortunes; and that in the utmost confidence of victory, should they be able to bring the British to an engagement, they were acting upon the offensive, and eager in the pursuit. It has been thought very high merit in some of the most distinguished generals, that they have been able to manage the retreat of a great army without material loss, and have conducted themselves so well as to turn upon and chastise their pursuers. It is the peculiar glory of the British commander that he did more than this; that he not only conducted the retreat of a large army without loss, but foiled his able antagonist at all points; that, not satisfied with turning to chastise him, he was able, in circumstances unexpected and disastrous, to obtain a most signal and decisive victory, and to drive his pursuers before him in disorder and consternation. If such talents as were here displayed do not constitute the perfection of military genius, we may reasonably ask, in what does this quality consist, and where is it to be found in the records of battles, or the history of the world?

The army of the centre, under Joseph Buonaparte, which had advanced from Madrid to join Marmont before the battle, had the mortification to find their comrades retreating in disorder.—Nothing could oppose the progress of the allied army; the French no longer attempted to defend the passage of the Douro; and Lord Wellington having crossed at Trudella, entered Valladolid on the 4th of August. He had always attached great importance to the fortress of Burgos, and would, in all probability, have proceeded immediately to reduce it, had he been enabled to bring up his artillery. The rapid movements of the army, however, had rendered this impossible; and as he foresaw the great effect, in a moral and political point of view, which might be produced by his advance to Madrid, he determined to move a part of the army in this direction. His conduct on this, as on other occasions, evinced a rare sagacity, and was fully justified by the circumstances in which he was placed. Of these circumstances, which encouraged the hope at this time entertained, that the close of the Spanish war was approaching, it may be proper to give some account in this place, that the merits of Lord Wellington's conduct, and the objects of his movements, may be more accurately appreciated.

The battle of Salamanca was distinguished from all the other battles hitherto fought in the peninsula, by several important circumstances; it was more masterly in the design, more brilliant in the execution, and followed by consequences of far greater importance, than any of its predecessors. By the movements and operations of the British at the opening of the campaign; by the reduction of the strong fortresses, and the separation of the French armies, the contending parties were placed in an attitude towards each other, very different indeed from that in which they formerly stood, and incomparably more favourable to the

allies. In the former battles, they had acted in a great measure upon the defensive, and by the display of the greatest bravery, had in very unfavourable circumstances repulsed the enemy, when he ventured to come to blows; but here the value of their former triumphs may be said to have ended. Limited as to the resources at his disposal, the British general seldom could follow up the advantages which he gained; while the enemy with a rapidity which denoted the extent of his means, and the vigour with which they were conducted, soon repaired his losses and resumed his former attitude. If the French were beaten in the field and compelled to retire, they were enabled to effect their retreat in such order, and quietly to take up so fine a position, that except the glory of the achievement, their enemies had little more to boast of. Our armies, indeed, were fast acquiring discipline and experience; and a school was formed for the education of British officers, from which many illustrious pupils have since issued; but these were benefits which were to be afterwards reaped, when circumstances should be more propitious to the operations of the British army. In the mean time, however, many vulgar critics who judged of all things by narrow maxims; who thought that victories could not have been won, because much ground had not been gained; who could not anticipate what might in future be done by that resistless enthusiasm, which a feeling of superiority was imparting to the British soldier; and who could see in Wellington no traits but those of an ordinary mind; laughed at him when he claimed the honours of victory, and called upon him to point out the signs and consequences of it. Their view of the state of Spain and the prospects of Europe was a very homely and simple one; they avowed with an air of triumph, that, for their part they were mere *matter-of fact men*, and could not follow the flights of those who still refused to despair of the fortunes of their country. They assumed it as a principle, that nothing could compensate to the British, that irremediable disadvantage as to numbers under which they must always meet their enemies on the continent; and this maxim being once established, every other evil followed of course. When their gloomy predictions were first disappointed at Vimiera, Talavera, and Albuhera, they demanded of their antagonists to point out with precision the benefits which were derived from these victories. They disavowed all sympathy with the generous feelings of the nation; they cared not for the triumphs of the British armies; the unfading laurels which had been won were purchased at too great an expence for these economical politicians, and the whole business of war was, according to their sordid notions, reduced to a matter of mere vulgar calculation. Their only question on such occasions was, what has been the expence, and what the gain how much has been thrown away in pounds, shillings, and pence, and how much territory has been acquired in reimbursement? They were busy in casting up such accounts about the Spanish war, and in uttering from their obscene temples the oracles of despair, when all their hopes were dissipated by the intelligence of the battle of Salamanca. A battle had now been fought which united at once all that was brilliant and useful; which had secured advantages to satisfy all classes of expectants; and while it was as rich in honour as the most generous could desire, had profit also in abundance to meet the wishes even of the most sordid politician. While one of the mightiest hosts of the enemy had been dispersed, his other armies of the

north, the south, and the centre were disjoined; a large portion of Spain was recovered; and an opportunity was afforded to the Spaniards themselves to come forward and seal the deliverance of their country. In its consequences, therefore, the victory of Salamanca was pre-eminently distinguished from all the former achievements of the British arms in Spain; even the most obstinate of the unbelievers began to shew some symptoms of amendment, and to doubt the soundness of their views; while those who had from the beginning taken the more generous and high-minded side in this great cause, were filled with hope and joy.

Lord Wellington having left a force under General Paget to watch the motions of the enemy, advanced with the main body of his army to the Spanish capital. Joseph Buonaparte had under his command 20,000 men; but on the approach of the British, he hastily evacuated Madrid, and retreated to Almanza on the frontiers of Murcia and Valencia; a position from which he could communicate either with Soult or with Suchet. On the 12th August, the allied army entered the capital; the Retiro garrisoned by 1500 men immediately surrendered; while Guadalaxara was at the same time taken by the Empicenado. Intelligence was also received that an army of about 16,000 men, consisting of British and Neapolitan troops from Sicily, with some Spaniards from Majorca, the whole commanded by a British officer, had reached Alicant; so that every thing seemed to promise a vigorous prosecution of hostilities, and a glorious termination of the campaign.

The Earl of Wellington naturally believed that the Spaniards would have availed themselves of this propitious opportunity to rescue their country from a foreign yoke. Their first efforts had been nobly seconded by the generosity of the British nation; and puny as all their subsequent exertions had been, the ardour of their allies had never abated. Great allowance was made for the unhappy condition of Spain at the moment when her independence was assailed by the most treacherous of enemies; and England, while she generously lent her aid to the almost despairing Spaniards, gave them credit for virtues which they have never discovered. It was supposed that the ardent love of independence, which was said to characterise the Spanish nation, and the unextinguishable hatred which they entertained towards the intruders, would have raised them to deeds worthy of a great people; but these most reasonable hopes were greatly disappointed. If the Spaniards loved the independence of their country much, they loved their own ease still more; if they hated the French, they had no other way of shewing their hatred, but in an irregular and petty warfare, which was marked, indeed, with a ferocity justifiable only against their present enemies. The moment had at length arrived, however, when, if there existed a single spark of genuine patriotism in Spain, it should have been struck out; and when by one grand and unanimous effort the whole Spanish nation might have been expected once for all to have avenged themselves on their oppressors. The joy which the people discovered when the British army entered Madrid, is thus described by Lord Wellington, on whose sober account even the most suspicious will rely. "It is impossible," says his lordship, "to describe the joy manifested by the inhabitants of Madrid upon our arrival; and I hope that the prevalence of the same sentiments of detestation of the French yoke, and of a strong desire to secure the independence of their country,

which first induced them to set the *example of resistance to the usurper*, will induce them to make exertions in the cause of their country, which will be more efficacious than those formerly made." Had the Spaniards acted thus, the independence of their country might have been established in the course even of this single campaign, which had already become so glorious; the British armies might have won elsewhere those laurels which they were still destined to gather in Spain; the sufferings of humanity might have been abridged, and the destinies of the world more easily fixed and secured. It will be a painful task to record, how far the Spanish nation was from fulfilling these expectations.

Doubts have been entertained by some persons, whether the plan formed by Lord Wellington at this great conjuncture, was quite conformable to the wisdom which generally marked his operations. It has been said, that it should have been the great object of the British general to have united the whole of the allied forces in the peninsula, and completed the separation of the different corps of the enemy; that, with this view, leaving a body of troops to prevent the passage of the Douro, he should have marched directly upon Alicant, threatened the armies of Suchet and Joseph Buonaparte, prevented their junction with Soult, and established his own communications with General Maitland; that thus united the allied army would have had no difficulty in accomplishing any object to which it might have been directed; while the enemy's forces, so widely separated, must have been incapable of attempting any operation of importance. The capital after this might easily have been preserved; and the unexpected disasters which followed might have been avoided. That it not easy to discover the reasons which induced the British commander to attach so much importance to the *possession of Burgos*; that this single fortress could never have enabled the beaten enemy to keep the field; nor could it, even in the most unfavourable event for the British army, have presented any serious obstacle to a retreat. That, in point of fact, the plan pursued by Lord Wellington was attended with this consequence,—that Soult, Suchet, and Joseph Buonaparte were enabled to unite their armies, and with the remains of Marmont's force, to compel the British, whom they far outnumbered, to retire.—Such are the opinions which have been professed by some judges not wholly incompetent; but there are others who have taken a different and apparently a juster view of the conduct of the British commander.

It was expected that the strong expedition under General Maitland, by uniting with the Spanish troops in that quarter, would have been able to co-operate in another and a more beneficial way with the grand army. The presence of so strong an army in that part of Spain, it was supposed, would have operated as a check upon Soult and Suchet, and prevented them from attempting any thing, while Lord Wellington was completing his plan of operations in the north; but these well-founded expectations were entirely disappointed by a series of accidents, which could not have entered into the contemplation of the British chief. The expedition under General Maitland was inadequate to any active operations without the aid of the Spaniards; and it unfortunately happened, that, just about the time when the expedition was disembarked at Alicant, the Spaniards commanded by General O'Donnell were defeated by the French under Harispe, and the plan of the campaign was thus in a great measure deranged. General Maitland was unavoidably cooped up

in Alicant by the very superior force which was brought against him; and Lord Wellington, whose plans had been formed on the supposition that he would be actively supported by the combined English and Spanish armies in the east, was totally abandoned by them, and exposed to the concentrated attack of all the enemy's forces. The fate of this expedition to Alicant was such as to excite against the Spaniards, whose obstinacy occasioned its entire failure, the ridicule and indignation of the British army. It could not be imputed as a fault to Lord Wellington, therefore, that he did not discontinue his operations in the north to proceed upon Alicant; but it was the fault or misfortune of those to whom that expedition was entrusted, and by whom he ought to have been supported, that his operations were not attended with all those great consequences to which they promised at one time to have led.

The restoration of Madrid to the Spaniards was not the only immediate consequence of the victory of Salamanca; the raising of the siege of Cadiz was another which might at that time have been turned to very great advantage by the Sp niards. The command of the French armies in the south of Spain had been entrusted to Marshal Soult, who enjoyed the highest reputation of all the French generals, and seemed to merit the confidence of his government not less by his zeal than by his ability. He was obstinately bent on retaining his hold over the southern provinces, and had determined never to evacuate them but in the last extremity. The victory of Salamanca, however, made a wonderful impression on his mind; and the fears which he began to entertain for his own safety prevailed over all other considerations. He had long maintained his position at Seville, upon which the safety of the troops engaged in the siege of Cadiz manifestly depended. But General Hill with a large British force was now upon the confines of Estremadura; a Spanish army was on the Niebla, and Ballasteros, who had hitherto discovered much activity and patriotism, was stationed on the Ronda. Soult perceived the dangers to which he was exposed; he saw that if he were unable to maintain his communication with the besieging force, that force must be withdrawn altogether; and he accordingly came to the determination of retreating. The harangues which he addressed to his soldiers before he had recourse to this painful alternative, were distinguished by a circumstance which may well be considered as singular in French accounts of military operations, and could no where appear more extraordinary than in an oration of Marshal Soult—a confession that "misfortunes had befallen the imperial eagle," and that it would require all the efforts of his army to repair these disasters. He immediately began to evacuate Andalusia; and on the 24th of August, the siege of Cadiz was raised.

What then was the actual condition of Spain at this auspicious moment? Gallicia, Leon, and the Asturias were entirely freed from the presence of the enemy, while Madrid, the greater part of New Castile and La Mancha, had been by one great blow recovered to the Spaniards. The French in Biscay were concentrating to evacuate that province also, and to join the wreck of Marmont's army—the siege of Cadiz had been raised, and Soult was preparing to evacuate Andalusia. Arragon was partly in possession of the Spaniards, and partly in that of the enemy—in Catalonia a spirited resistance was maintained, which rendered the enemy's hold of the province very precarious; and in Navarre, the partizan Mina had not only operated with great effect against the enemy by cut-

ting off his straggling parties and intercepting his supplies, but had frequently penetrated into France, where he spread terror and devastation, and took an imperfect revenge for the sufferings of his country. In Murcia and Valencia, where Suchet commanded, and where, from the beginning he had been but inadequately opposed by the undisciplined armies of Spain, the enemy maintained a doubtful dominion; but from these provinces also it was to be expected that the French would soon be driven by the allied forces which were collecting against them.

The enemy, on the other hand, still possessed a very formidable army in the peninsula. The whole forces under Clausel, (who had succeeded Marmont) Suchet, Soult, and Joseph Buonaparte, amounted to 150,000 men; and as the misfortunes of the French had hitherto arisen in great part from their separate and disjointed plans of operations, they determined to profit by experience, and, if possible, to avoid so great an error in future. Their plan was, that the remainder of Marmont's army, reinforced by the troops from Biscay, should move in the direction of Burgos, and watch the British troops destined for the siege of that place, while Soult with Joseph Buonaparte and Suchet should advance upon Madrid, and compel the British to evacuate it. They hoped that Lord Wellington would thus be placed in critical circumstances—that the enemy's approach to Madrid and to Burgos at the same time would ultimately force him either to fight on disadvantageous terms, or to retreat. To execute this extensive plan, they hesitated not to make any sacrifices, and considered even the evacuation of the north and south of Spain as of comparatively trifling importance.

A very unfortunate combination of circumstances, which happened at this period, gave the French an advantage which they little expected. The absence of Lord Wellington at Madrid was in some measure favourable to their views, for it afforded them an opportunity of rallying, and, with the aid of the reinforcements which they received, of attempting once more to act upon the offensive. They sent strong detachments along the Douro—they raised the sieges of Toro and Zamora, and were enabled to withdraw the garrisons established in these forts. They hoped to be successful in saving Astorga, which was besieged by the British troops; but in this instance they found themselves anticipated by the superior activity of the assailants, to whom the fortress had surrendered. The army which endeavoured to relieve this place returned to Valladolid, but was speedily compelled to retreat before Lord Wellington, who had by this time retired from Madrid. So great was the panic with which they were seized on the approach of the British, that they not only abandoned Valladolid, but left Burgos wholly defenceless, and retreated towards the Ebro.

Burgos had at one time been considered by the Spaniards as among the most important of their strong-holds; but this opinion was formed at a period when the artifices of modern warfare were almost wholly unknown. The characteristic indolence of the Spaniards had suffered it to fall into such decay, and the defence of it was upon the whole so feeble, that the invader in his progress through Spain found but little difficulty in reducing it. The French, however, employed themselves with their usual diligence and skill in improving the fortifications; they made Burgos the centre of their operations in the north of Spain, and zealously employed themselves for two years in rendering it one of the strongest places in the peninsula.

The British general was severely censured for wasting so much valuable time at Madrid, and neglecting to follow up his successes; but a satisfactory explanation may easily be given of his conduct on this occasion. He considered himself with great justice as the ally only of the Spanish nation; he did not imagine that it was his duty to fight their battles without support; he expected the active co-operation of the Spaniards themselves in vindicating their independence; and upon reaching their capital, he was naturally desirous of bringing their principles and feelings to some test. He despised the feeble system of government to which the destinies of Spain were committed; and he was anxious to countenance and promote some great political changes. He was not less a politician than a soldier; he knew well, that by such military exertions as Spain was able to make in her degraded condition, she could never resist with effect the force opposed to her; and he was anxious, therefore, to infuse into the Spaniards those noble and generous sentiments which were necessary to their situation. It was his great object, therefore, on entering the Spanish capital, to revive and elevate the people—to inspire them with true patriotism, and to excite in them a feeling of heroic perseverance, which, under any change of circumstances, must have rendered them invincible. Such was the grand object of his stay at Madrid; and if he failed in his purpose, the fault lay with the Spaniards, and not with him, who had delivered them from oppression, and who, if the destinies of Spain had been committed to his care, would have elevated a race of men, whom an odious tyranny had so long debased.

The French armies retired on the approach of Lord Wellington to the siege of Burgos. The city presented no serious obstacle to the besiegers; it was on the castle which commanded the neighbouring roads, and on the hill of St Michael's, that the French had exhausted all the efforts of their skill. *Lord Wellington had obvious* reasons for pushing the siege with vigour, and he therefore ordered the outwork upon the hill to be immediately stormed. This service was performed during the night, with the same success which had marked all the other operations of the army; but so thick was the darkness, that some mistakes were committed by the assailants, in consequence of which their loss was more than usually severe, amounting to 300 men killed, and wounded. The French stationed in the works were 500 in number, only 63 of whom were made prisoners, the remainder having perished in the fury of the assault. The possession of these heights enabled the British to take a more accurate survey of the strength of the castle; and they soon perceived that they would have a formidable resistance to encounter. It may be presumed, however, that their energy and perseverance would have triumphed over all resistance, but for a series of untoward events, which for a season interrupted their career of glory.

The rapidity of Lord Wellington's advance had prevented him from bringing up his heavy artillery, without which nothing but the imperious necessity which he felt at this time for the most vigorous operations, could have justified him in attempting to take the castle of Burgos. He was thus compelled to abandon the ordinary method of attack, for want of a proper artillery train, and to resort to the slower and more uncertain process of sapping the works.—The defence was conducted with great skill and resolution by the garrison; the governor had instructions to hold out to the last extremity. So soon as the British had got possession of St Michael's

hill, they erected a battery, which commanded the outer line of the works, connecting the fortress with the town. This line was escaladed at two points by a British and Portugueze detachment; the Portugueze, however, failed in their attempt, and the British had advanced so far, that it was not without some difficulty they were drawn off. The French after this did not remain altogether on the defensive; they made successively two sorties against the works of the besiegers, which, however, were not attended with very important consequences. The loss of Major Collier, the field officer, in the trenches, who fell while rallying the troops during the second of these sorties, was deeply regretted by Lord Wellington and the whole army.

The besiegers, in spite of all the efforts of the garrison, still continued to make rapid progress; they established themselves within 100 yards of the enemy's interior line; they effected a breach in another part of the same line; accomplished a lodgement, and carried on their mines under ground with the utmost celerity. On the 11th of October, a mine was successfully sprung; the breaches were instantly stormed, and the lines escaladed, and part of the British troops actually entered the works; but the fire from the garrison was so heavy, that they were unable to sustain themselves, and retired after suffering some loss. The recolleetion, however, of what had been done at Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz; the astonishing progress which had already been made even before Burgos, and the universal confidence reposed in the intrepidity of the troops, and the fortunes of their commander, filled the British nation with the most sanguine hopes that this place was destined very soon to follow the fall of the other strongholds, which had already been wrested from the enemy.—But a series of accidents occurred, to prevent the fulfilment of these expectations.

The defeat of the Spaniards under O'Donnell, and the consequent inactivity of the expedition which had been sent to Alicant, have already been mentioned, and these unfortunate circumstances were of themselves sufficient to have deranged the whole plan of the campaign. But other misfortunes, neither less serious nor unexpected, happened about this time to embarrass the British general, and to deprive him of all chance of reaping the full advantages of his late achievements. When Lord Wellington advanced to the north, he expected to have received the support of the Gallician army; an army which was said to consist of 30,000 disciplined troops, in the highest state of order and equipment, and commanded by officers of talent and experience. These magnificent promises, however, were sadly belied by the result; and Lord Wellington had the mortification to find, that this Spanish army consisted of 10,000 instead of 30,000 men, without discipline, without equipments of any kind, and commanded by men who had yet to learn the rudiments of their profession. Severe, indeed, must this disappointment have been to the British chief, and disgraceful to the Spaniards were the misrepresentations by which they had deceived their generous allies. Deeper mortifications, however, yet awaited Lord Wellington; and the Spaniards were, in the person of one of their most popular leaders, to give a striking example of that melancholy infatuation which so long retarded the deliverance of their country.

General Ballasteros, one of the most successful of the Spanish chieftains, commanded an army of his countrymen in the south, where he had already

signalized himself by gallantry rather than by skill; by perseverance and devotion, rather than by any systematic exertions, which alone can lead to great consequences. He had at first been a chief of Guerillas, and wanted not the qualities which fitted him for such a station. The character of his mind, originally narrow and vulgar, seems to have been confirmed by the habits of the predatory warfare in which he was engaged; and although he had often been successful in detached enterprises against the enemy, where an irregular valour alone was required, yet had he made but little progress towards the liberation of his country. In his conduct as commander of the army before Gibraltar he had given no indication of the higher qualities which are required in the chief of a large army; and although, when Soult retreated towards the Valencian frontier, the Spaniards under Ballasteros had at first followed him with seeming activity, and had even gained some advantages over his rear-guard, yet he no sooner entered Granada than they resigned themselves to utter inactivity. Ballasteros was at this time meditating the ambitious project of seizing on the chief command of the Spanish armies, which the cortes had so wisely conferred on Lord Wellington; and, wholly absorbed by this idle dream, he forgot the duty which he owed to his country. He was ordered by Lord Wellington to advance, and fall upon the flanks of the French army; but he answered these commands by an appeal to the Spanish army and nation against the cortes, to whose voice the British general owed his elevation to the chief command. He developed all his ambition and imbecillity; he assumed a peevish and insolent tone towards his superiors; and his appeal was heard with the indifference which it merited. Neither the nation nor the army sympathized with his follies, and he was without opposition superseded, arrested, and exiled to Ceuta.

That the fate of Ballasteros excited little compassion is not wonderful; for although he was indisputably a brave man, yet was his ambition of a very selfish and unreasonable character. The feeling of rivalry which he seems to have entertained toward Lord Wellington was at once ridiculous and ungenerous; it was ridiculous, because of the great distance betwixt them, and ungenerous, on account of the numerous services which the British general had already rendered to Spain. The pride of the Spaniards might well be mortified, indeed, when the decision of the cortes announced to the world, that none of them were qualified to lead the armies to battle, or to take a conspicuous part in the liberation of their common country; but this feeling of mortification would have infused into more generous and elevated minds, nothing but greater zeal to acquire the qualifications by which this reproach might have been removed, and ought never to have generated the envious malice by which Ballasteros must have been influenced. But even if his personal or national pride could have palliated his refusal to obey the chief, whom the government of his country had placed over him, such an excuse certainly can never be offered for his inactivity, at a moment when the fate of Spain was to be decided. If he did not obey Lord Wellington,—if he hesitated as to the prudence of his measures, or questioned his authority, he ought at all events to have served his country, by the most vigorous direction of the resources entrusted to him, towards the destruction of the enemy. Those who recollect, that a considerable Spanish army was at this critical season ren-

dered useless, by the peevish and obstinate folly of a Spanish general; that the plans of the campaign were thus deranged by his frowardness; that time was afforded to the French to rally, and come down on the allies in numbers, which rendered success for the present wholly unattainable, will think, perhaps, that the punishment of Ballasteros did not equal his offence; and how much soever they may commiserate his folly, they cannot surely regret his fate.

In consequence of these untoward accidents, the inaction of the Anglo-Sicilian expedition, the inefficiency of the Spanish army of Gallicia, and the insanity of General Ballasteros, Lord Wellington found his situation very different from what he had been led to expect. The French army of Portugal, greatly reinforced, was advancing under Souham, who had now taken the command, with the view of either raising the siege of Burgos, or forcing the British to fight at disadvantage. On the 15th of October they attacked the British outposts, but were repulsed with great spirit; and on the 19th, their whole force had approached the vicinity of Burgos. The movements of Souham and Soult were nearly simultaneous, and formed part of the same plan which the latter general had adopted for recovering Madrid. On the 21st, Lord Wellington received information that the whole French forces under Soult, Suchet, and Joseph Buonaparte, amounting to 70,000 men, were fast approaching the passes, and threatened General Hill, who had no adequate force to oppose to them. This intelligence determined Lord Wellington to raise the siege of Burgos, and to march to the support of the allied army in Madrid; and he accordingly retired towards the Douro, closely followed by the French under Souham. On the 23d, the British approached Valladolid, and a sharp affair occurred at Torquenada, which ended in the repulse of the enemy.

It would be difficult to describe the feelings of the British people when they were first informed of these events—when they learned that the Spanish capital was again in possession of the enemy, and that the siege of Burgos had been raised by an army which had so lately been broken and dispersed by the besiegers. The most violent indignation was expressed; reproaches were cast on the ministry, and even upon Lord Wellington himself. A few profligate persons treated with derision all the hopes which had been raised as to the ultimate issue of the contest, while good men of all parties felt the deepest regret at the unexpected turn which affairs had taken, and which threatened to deprive the allies of the fruits of so many great achievements. The ministers were loudly censured for "starving the war in Spain," (to use the very classical form of expression which was current at this time,) for sending out reinforcements in numbers so small, and at seasons so unsuitable, that they were of no real service to the cause of Spain. It was forgotten that England was not the principal in the Spanish war, and that her whole resources could not, with any regard to prudence, have been hastily directed to this object alone. Those who disliked Lord Wellington, because his victories had thwarted their narrow views, cast many reflections on his rashness in advancing so far into Spain, without providing for the security of his previous acquisitions, and the safety of his retreat; they predicted the most disastrous consequences to the Spanish cause from the dejection into which the minds of the people would be suddenly precipitated from that height of confidence to which they had been raised, and they prophesied the ruin of the army from a

retreat, which is always so repugnant to the feelings of British soldiers, and so destructive of their discipline. They forgot the unexpected disappointments which Lord Wellington had suffered, and described that conduct as the offspring of a wild temerity, which in other circumstances would have been applauded as a master-piece of wise and prudent daring.—Lord Wellington was also censured for remaining inactive at Madrid by those who thought not of the fatigues which the army had already undergone, or the necessity of ascertaining the real extent of the co-operation which was to be received from the Spaniards, before the ulterior movements were determined upon. He was charged also with having undertaken the siege of Burgos, when his means were wholly inadequate to such an enterprise, and with trusting too much to the bravery of his troops, at the hazard of sacrificing many valuable lives. Yet was it manifest to any person capable of a moment's reflection, that without the reduction of this fortress, nothing farther could have been done in the campaign; that the ultimate success of the siege would have been assured, if circumstances, beyond the control of the British general, had proved favourable; and that, as in the cases of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo, an immediate sacrifice of the soldiers to a certain extent, becomes, in truth, a sacrifice to humanity, and saves the lives of thousands who must perish in the course of protracted operations. It may seem unfeeling in military men thus to make the lives of their fellow creatures an affair of dry calculation: it must be remembered, however, that war cannot be conducted at all without such sacrifices, and that when a government and people resolve on hostilities, the military leader to whom they entrust the execution of their counsels, cannot be charged with indifference to human suffering when he uses his best efforts to execute their designs. It was for such reasons that Lord Wellington carried Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz by storm; and, influenced by the same motives, he commenced the siege of Burgos, and would have brought it to a conclusion no less fortunate, had he not been called by other events to change for a season the whole plan of his operations.

The British army, threatened as it now was by the united forces of the enemy, began its retreat. Lord Wellington knew well what a scene an army presents on such an occasion, and how much the talents of a consummate officer are required to maintain discipline and subordination. Arduous and delicate in the highest degree, therefore, was the task which he had to perform; and nothing could have animated him in the execution of it but the hope that he might again be able to turn upon the enemy, and, profiting by their errors, give full scope to the bravery of his soldiers. The late Sir John Moore, who had experienced all the difficulties of a situation similar in some respects to that in which Lord Wellington was now placed, had remarked of his army, that he had nothing to say in its praise, unless when a chance of meeting the enemy presented itself; and the great secret, therefore, in conducting the retreat, was to profit by such chances as might occur, and to encourage in the minds of the soldiers the hope that they were retiring only to fight at greater advantage. During the whole retreat, the British army displayed, under its illustrious leader, its wonted steadiness and bravery; and, although closely pressed at different points by very superior numbers, retired in the finest order. On one occasion, indeed, the French overtook a part of the retreating army with so very superior a force, that they compelled it to change its

route, which was accomplished without loss or confusion.—On the 27th of October the allies were posted on the left of the Pisuerga. The French crossed the river on the same day, and formed on the heights opposite to the British position. The next day the enemy attempted to gain possession of the bridges, and came down in such force that it was deemed expedient to blow up one of them; to abandon the Pisuerga and cross the Douro,—a movement which was effected without loss.—The French, however, still continued to press hard on the retreating army; they dislodged a German regiment which was posted on the ruins of the bridge of Tordesillas, and advanced with their whole force upon the city. No time was to be lost; and it became necessary that Lord Wellington should either secure for himself a position, in which he could give battle to the enemy, or hasten his retreat. He of course preferred the first of these alternatives, and resolved to occupy some heights between Rueda and Tordesillas, opposite the ruins of the bridge. While these movements were executed by that part of the army under the immediate command of their great leader, orders were dispatched to General Hill to break up from his position on the Jacuma, and to reach the Aduga by the 3d or 4th of November. These orders were strictly obeyed, and by the 3d of that month the whole British army was once more united.—The French under Soult and Souham had also an opportunity of joining. Soult had already abandoned Madrid with a determination to employ the whole French forces in driving the British back to Portugal. The enemy endeavoured to turn the flank [illegible] tiring army; their main body advanced to Toro and Zamora to threaten its left, and Soult marched on Avila, in hopes of turning the right. Lord Wellington immediately put his whole forces in motion, and retired on Salamanca, where he hoped to be able to establish himself, and to maintain the heights of St Chrystoval in front of the city. But the united forces of the enemy were too numerous and powerful, and he was obliged to evacuate this city, and continue his retreat.

As he did not, however, despair of finding a favourable opportunity for bringing the French to action, he carefully watched all their movements. They had taken post at Alba; and he believed for a moment that here he should at last be enabled to inflict that chastisement which he had so long meditated. He reconnoitred their position with great care, but he found it so strong both by nature and art, that it would have indicated the greatest temerity to attack it. The French, in the meantime, had moved their cavalry forward in such a direction as to threaten the British communications with the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo. Lord Wellington, however, disconcerted their plans, and effected his own retreat without material loss, if we except one singular casualty which happened about this period. Sir Edward Paget, a brave and able officer, commanded the centre columns during the movement which has just been described; the roads had become so bad by the heavy and incessant rains, that an interval occurred betwixt the fifth and seventh divisions of infantry, and Sir Edward rode alone to the rear to discover the cause why the latter division had not come up. He missed his way, and fell into the hands of the enemy. The accident was somewhat singular, but was of no other importance than as it deprived the service for a time of the aid of a distinguished soldier, and gave the French an opportunity of boasting that they had made prisoner a British officer of such rank and consequence.—The allies, in the

meantime, continued their retreat with scarcely any other inconvenience than what was experienced from the badness of the roads, till they reached the Portugueze frontier, where they were distributed in extensive cantonments; and as the season of the year no longer admitted of military movements, the conquerors of Salamanca were allowed to enjoy the repose necessary to prepare them for the toils of another campaign, which was to be scarcely more glorious, but far more decisive.

This memorable retreat, which disappointed so much the hopes and expectations of the British nation, was distinguished by circumstances peculiarly honourable to the British arms. The first circumstance of this kind which demands attention, is the comparative numbers of the forces on each side; and it is fortunate, that, in this instance, we have the means of ascertaining the strength of the allies and of the enemy with more than ordinary precision. The whole of the allied forces in the peninsula, British, Portugueze, and Germans, did not exceed in number 66,000 men, who were thus distributed:—Lord Wellington and General Hill had under them 31,000 British and Germans, of whom 27,000 were infantry and 4000 cavalry; and, in addition to these, they had 21,000 Portugueze, who had become, under British officers, nearly equal to the troops by whose side they had so often fought. The expedition which had been sent to Alicant consisted of a considerable body of British and Sicilians; a Spanish army of 12,000 or 15,000 was expected to join it, but had been dispersed by the enemy before the junction became practicable. At the close of the campaign, however, 8000 British troops were on their way to join the grand army; but the fate of Spain, for the present year at least, had been decided before it was possible for them to reach head-quarters. The whole allied force, therefore, which could be rendered effective, did not at the period of this retreat exceed 52,000, exclusive of the reinforcement latterly sent out, and the Alicant expedition, so that the means at Lord Wellington's disposal, although undoubtedly sufficient for the great objects in view, had the Spaniards done their duty to their country, were still very limited.—Let us now enquire what the French had to oppose to this force, according to the statements which were given by themselves. They had, first of all, very considerable detachments under Caffarelli, Decaen, and others, who were occupied with the irregular warfare maintained by the Spaniards in Navarre, Arragon, Biscay, and Catalonia; but as these troops were not at present employed against the regular armies of the allies, we shall leave them wholly out of account. But the French forces opposed to the armies under Lord Wellington were numerous and well appointed; and nothing can tend more to illustrate the talents of this great officer than a faithful display of the numbers of the hosts which, with the comparatively small force above described, he contrived to set at defiance. Soult alone, who had now assumed the chief command of the armies of Souham and Joseph Buonaparte, had under him no less than 75,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry, making in all a force of 87,000 men, that is, almost double the numbers of his antagonist. In addition to these, Suchet still had in the east of Spain about 20,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry, thus raising the whole disposable French force employed in the peninsula against the British armies alone, to 112,000 men, well equipped and in the highest state of discipline. In the number of his cavalry in particular, the enemy was very superior; but in its quality it could bear no sort of comparison

with the British. In artillery, the French were very powerful. Soult alone carried with him about 200 pieces of cannon; and in this manner had greatly the advantage of his antagonist in the strength of one mighty arm, of which the English have never perhaps sufficiently availed themselves.

In another circumstance, and that not the least material to the efficiency of an army, the French, from a policy not very honourable, had many advantages,—we allude at present to the commissariat. It is remarkable, that although the British entered Spain for the avowed purpose of saving it from the most cruel of all tyrannies, and although they had performed the most signal exploits to secure this great object, their armies never were so well supplied with provisions as those of the enemy. The Spaniards were willing enough that the English should fight for them, but they seem never to have been very willing to make any considerable sacrifice to the cause of national independence. The English were too honourable to take any thing by violence, and they were therefore ill supplied; but the French, who despised all scruples of this kind, seized without hesitation the property of the Spaniards. These circumstances, when duly considered, will convey some idea of the different situations of the contending armies,—they will shew how inferior the resources of all kinds were with which the British general was called upon to resist the enemy, and will go farther to explain the obstacles which he surmounted, and the talents which he displayed in this retreat, than the most laboured panegyric. Let it be remembered, that with means so unequal he set the enemy at defiance, and conducted the retreat of his army in safety; that the French, with all their advantages, never ventured to attack him, and seldom took up a position which they were not careful to secure by all the resources of the military art. This was destined to be the last trial of that admirable self-command by which Lord Wellington kept the natural boldness of his character in subordination to the maxims of prudence; the remainder of his career in the peninsula was to be illuminated by one constant blaze of glory.

CHAP. XIII.

Affairs of Russia. Causes which led to the Rupture betwixt Russia and France. Preparations of the Parties. The French invade Russia. Progress of the Campaign till the Advance of the Invader upon Smolensko.

The campaign of the French in Russia will form one of the most interesting and extraordinary passages in history, whether we consider the mighty interests which depended on its issue, the greatness of the means employed on both sides, the singular and striking events which marked its progress, or the momentous consequences with which it was followed. The greatest military power which modern Europe ever saw had been concentrated for the purpose of achieving a conquest, which was expected to lay the whole civilized world at the feet of the conqueror. But all the efforts of genius, discipline, and numbers were rendered abortive by the heroic courage and patriotism of the Russian people; and the vast preparations of the invader, by which he had arrogantly calculated on obtaining universal dominion, availed him not in this season of unwonted trial. Defeated and disgraced, his armies annihilated, and himself a fugitive, he was compelled not only to abandon his unlucky enterprise, but to leave his former conquests to the unsparing vengeance of his enemies, who, gathering strength as they advanced, and animated by a succession of triumphs, were at last enabled to execute an awful retribution for all the wrongs which they had endured.

No person who knew any thing of the character of Buonaparte, or the policy of the French government, could doubt for a moment as to the real nature of the treaty of Tilsit. It was but a hollow truce, consented to by the French ruler till he should be able to accomplish other more pressing objects of his ambition. That a lasting and friendly intercourse should have subsisted betwixt the French government, in the plenitude of its power, and any state of Europe, not yet reduced to abject dependence, was beyond all sober calculation; the whole course of French policy, all the acts of the new government, whether in peace or war, indicated a fixed design of attaining universal empire. Whether it was at any time very wise, even upon the exclusive views of ambition, to cherish so hazardous a project, is of no importance; but that it was really entertained, acted upon, and even avowed, is beyond all dispute. The Emperor Alexander must have been aware of this; he could not be blind to what the humblest politicians in other parts of Europe had perceived; and how much soever he might have been misled by the artifices of the enemy, and a momentary feeling of dislike towards England, he could not long remain in error as to the

course of policy which he was called upon to pursue towards France. Nor could he be ignorant that his power gave him a fair chance, on the first favourable opportunity, of performing what his duty urged him to attempt —the reduction of the influence of France, which had spread so much misery over the continent. Russia had not indeed made a very conspicuous figure in European wars, waged at a distance from her own frontiers; and many persons rashly concluded, that she was therefore impotent as to resources, and wholly insignificant in the arrangements of European policy. No intelligent Russian, however, could commit so gross an error; while the Russian government must have been aware of the ample resources of the [empire] when the hour of trial should arrive, and ought never to have sunk, like the rulers of feebler states, into despondency. It is true, indeed, that Russia, removed at so great a distance from the ordinary theatre of European war, had exercised but little controul over its results; that she had been found tardy and impotent in the defence of Germany; and had of late sacrificed her political character by a monstrous union with the common enemy. Her alliance had often been unavailing to the continental nations struggling against France, because her troops could seldom be brought into the field till the contest had been decided; because, when they did reach the scene of action, their bravery was rendered unavailing by defective arrangements; and because the poverty of the Russian treasury constantly prevented the military energies of the country from developing themselves. This casual weakness arose out of the general condition of R[ussia; but] it was not of such a nature as to create a suspicion of her real strength, when it should be drawn out under a better system, or roused into full vigour by indignation or despair. The strength of Russia could seldom indeed be rendered efficient at any distance from the confines of the empire; but it might prove not the less formidable when these confines should be passed, and her enemies should be reduced to combat on her own soil, and under all the disadvantages which the extent of the country and the severity of the climate presented to an invader.

The military talent of the Russian commanders had not, generally speaking, appeared of the first order in the great battles to which they had lent their aid since the French revolution; but it was to be expected that the leading men of such a country would, in extremities, display that sort of military genius which, in the operations of a protracted, defensive warfare, might overpower the first tacticians of the age. Such a country as Russia, with a population brave, hardy, and persevering, could not be suddenly conquered; it must, in any circumstances, have made a long and desperate resistance; and its permanent subjugation appeared utterly impossible to all reasonable men. Such, however, was the melancholy extravagance of many persons, that they considered the conquest of Russia as certain, when Buonaparte left Paris with the avowed purpose of undertaking this hazardous enterprise; and if he condescended, in this instance, to listen for a moment to the advice of his servile admirers, they may justly be charged with having contributed to precipitate his downfal.

The Russian government was sensible of its real condition—of the natural resources of the country—the devoted patriotism of the people—the means of defence which they possess[ed—the] rashness of the assailants, and, above all, of the impossibility of long averting the struggle into which the circumstances of Europe must one

day hurry Russia with France. They knew that neither the treaty of Tilsit, nor any other obligation, how solemn soever, could avert for a moment the vengeance of Buonaparte against Russia, whenever circumstances might favour its execution. They felt that the treaty, whatever nominal advantages it might have conferred on Russia, had in reality sealed her degradation; and they detested the odious restraints which threatened their country with ruin.—When Buonaparte entered into the treaty of Tilsit, his mind was filled with the arrogant notion that he was destined to effect the downfal of England, which he hated, as the asylum of liberty, the successful enemy of France, and the great barrier to his projects of ambition. He knew that a direct attack on England was altogether hopeless while her navy triumphed on the ocean; while her armies maintained a pre-eminence not less conspicuous, and the stability of the government was fixed in the affections of the people. He had threatened an invasion, which he soon perceived that he could never accomplish; for he was instantly confined to his own ports by fleets which he did not venture to meet; his gasconades were in a few weeks answered by the appearance of more than half a million of men in arms; and England thus exhibited to him the exasperating spectacle of a mighty and generous nation, defying all his menaces. Finding all direct efforts to subjugate her impracticable, he resolved on measures for gradually exhausting her resources. Such was the origin of the Berlin and Milan decrees, by which the commerce of England was excluded from the continent. But while the edicts of Buonaparte were limited in their operation to the [illegible] over which he exercised a direct controul, they were found to be in a great measure ineffectual. His plan, therefore was to render them general throughout the continent, to seduce or compel all nations to give them effect, and in this manner to dissolve for ever the commercial relations of Great Britain with continental Europe. To induce the nations over whom he dared not yet avow a direct influence, to accede to this monstrous system, he invented many absurd fictions; he represented England as the eternal enemy of the continent, the tyrant of the seas, the disturber of the peace of Europe, and the foe of the civilized world. He strenuously insisted on the principle said to have been recognized by the treaty of Utrecht, that free ships should make free goods, and vainly supposed that in time of war he might thus neutralise the force of the British navy by providing for the permanence of the commercial relations of France. He called his system "The Continental System," as if he himself had already been absolute master of the European continent; thus betraying his conviction, that nothing short of an entire combination of the continental powers, under one undivided scheme of despotism, could ever affect the prosperity and grandeur of England. He had introduced many singular conditions into the treaty of Tilsit; but that by which Russia bound herself to accede to the continental system, and to exclude British produce and manufactures from her ports, he was chiefly anxious to enforce. The Emperor of Russia soon found that he had been deceived when he agreed to this article, and that he would be compelled to violate the treaty, even should the French ruler hesitate to set him the example.

But Buonaparte did not thus hesitate. Long before the commercial relations betwixt England and Russia underwent any modification, or at least before such modification was made the subject of remonstrance and complaint, he seized the duchy of Oldenburgh,

and thus insulted the Russian emperor, both as the ally and the near relative of the family which was dispossessed. The treaty of Tilsit could not, indeed, have lasted much longer, because it was unjust and absurd in its p: and must have proved fatal to Russia and to Europe; yet the impatience and rapacity of the aggressor deserve to be recorded. It has been often remarked, that engagements extorted by violence seldom survive the unhappy combination of circumstances in which they have been created; but the impolitic haste with which the French ruler in this instance proceeded to manifest his contempt for all engagements, even those which he had so great an interest in maintaining, was truly characteristic of his nature. The Russian government protested against this act of faithless violence; and the unsatisfactory answer of the French minister amounted to this,—that a remonstrance by any power against its ally had no precedent in the history of nations! It was strange policy in Buonaparte, if he expected the aid of Russia, and felt reluctant, as he well might, to hazard every thing in an attempt to subdue her, thus to authorise, by his own example, a breach of the treaty on her part. Yet such was his arrogance or infatuation, that he furnished Russia not only with plausible pretexts, but with sound reasons for violating a treaty which she must at all events have speedily determined not to observe. He pretended that the possession of the duchy of Oldenburgh was necessary to enable him to execute his continental system; and, after his own manner, he proposed that the family, whom he had thus driven out, should receive a compensation for their losses by the robbery of their neighbours. He affected great surprise and indignation that the emperor of Russia should presume to interfere with the affairs of this duchy, which was under his own immediate care as protector of the confederation of the Rhine; and, above all, he maintained, that this act of oppression, although it might seem a violation of the terms, was yet agreeable to the spirit of the treaty of Tilsit. Even had his cause been good, his arguments were too refined to make a strong impression in his favour; the terms of a treaty form a much safer and more palpable basis of interpretation than its alleged spirit; and the majority of mankind are happily more accessible to plain arguments than to logical subtleties. Every one could read and comprehend the terms of the treaty of Tilsit, while few could judge of its spirit; because few persons could pretend to understand the whole scope of these momentous negociations.—The rashness of Buonaparte in the seizure of the duchy of Oldenburgh operated just as the vices and follies of conquerors have often done before, by assisting to rescue the world from their tyranny, and to open the eyes of mankind to the real character of their ambition.

Is has been usual with the revolutionary governments of France to affect moderation after their greatest successes, and to enter into treaties which were calculated to impose on surrounding nations a belief of their sincerity. They have often agreed to evacuate countries of which, at the date of the treaty, they had military possession; but they have taken care at all times either indirectly to secure the subserviency of such countries, or have most shamefully violated their engagements, and resorted to a thousand pretexts for retaining possession by violence, long after other nations had sunk into security and repose. In this point Buonaparte has been a constant and successful imitator; and although he stipulated by the treaty of Tilsit, that his troops should evacuate Prussia, it is probable that no one but the Emperor Alexander him-

self was surprised at the treacherous refusal to fulfil this condition. Prussia, long after the peace of Tilsit, remained in the military occupation of the French; and this flagrant breach of treaty formed another ground of complaint on the part of Russia. The sophistry to which Buonaparte resorted in defence of his conduct will be afterwards noticed; but in this summary of the circumstances which precipitated hostilities betwixt these great empires, it is important to remark, that the French ruler had been guilty at all events of two very palpable violations of the treaty of Tilsit, which were of themselves quite sufficient to have justified the war for which Russia had been making silent preparation.

The chief ground of quarrel assigned by the French, was the infidelity of Russia to her engagements respecting the continental system. The Emperor Alexander could not be long deceived on this subject; and even if he had been rash enough to attempt enforcing that absurd system throughout his dominions, he would have been soon awakened from his delusion by the discontent and resistance of his people. He who should attempt in the present state of society to destroy trade, would undertake to oppose all the propensities and habits of mankind; and to sink them once more in barbarism and misery. There are in all countries many degenerate persons who care but little as to the nature of the government under which they live, but all can feel and will avenge any attempt to deprive them of their comforts and luxuries. The most barbarous nations cannot, in the present state of the world, be indifferent to regulations of trade; for there is none so rude and barbarous, as not to have some share in the benefits which it bestows. The Russians, although not perhaps a very refined people, have a deep interest in commercial affairs, and naturally love to cultivate a friendly intercourse with England, which, of all other countries, is best calculated to supply their wants, and relieve them of their surplus produce. The cessation of intercourse with Great Britain threatened ruin to the nobility and landholders of Russia; and they are supposed to have resisted the continental system with firmness and vigour. The emperor could not have disregarded their remonstrances, even if he had been insensible to the degradation of his country; and he could not, therefore, have continued the suspension of commercial intercourse with England, even although the renewal of it threatened him with the whole vengeance of his new ally.

It was a singular feature in the policy of Buonaparte, that, although he insisted on the most rigorous execution by his allies of the Berlin and Milan decrees, he presumed himself to set them at defiance. The pressure of the continental system on France was intolerable; the sufferings of the people surpassed all endurance; and, what was more likely to influence a despotic government, the revenue sustained the most serious defalcation. Still affecting an adherence to the principle of his decrees, Buonaparte in the meantime ventured on very frequent relaxations of them in practice; he granted licences under which considerable importations from England took place, and he thus relieved the growing embarrassments of his treasury. Surely the Emperor of Russia was entitled to follow his example, and to abate in some measure, the sufferings of his people; nor could Buonaparte with any semblance of justice have objected to this course, even if the treaty of Tilsit had bound the Russian emperor to go hand in hand with him to accomplish the humiliation of England. His wants were

greater; the condition of his empire more imperiously demanded the sacrifice of his strange policy; and on no principle could he be called upon to take the lead in the execution of the frantic project which the French ruler had conceived, or submit to greater hardships than the author of this novel scheme of warfare. When the Russian government, therefore, prohibited the importation of British goods, except under special licences, and in neutral ships, it did all that it was bound to do towards executing the treaty of Tilsit; for this very obvious reason, that it did all which the author of this very compact had been able to perform even within the confines of his own dominions.

This imperfect obedience, however, did not satisfy the French ruler; and the Russian government must have known from the beginning that it would not.—Preparations had accordingly been made so early as the spring of 1811, to meet the crisis which was fast approaching. Two hundred thousand troops were concentrated in the western provinces of the Russian empire; 500,000 muskets and 2000 pieces of ordnance were manufactured with unexampled rapidity; the cannon from the arsenals in the interior were secretly dispatched towards the frontier, and the fortifications on the Dwina were strengthened and improved.

The open violation of the treaty of Tilsit by the seizure of the duchy of Oldenburgh, might have been followed by an immediate declaration of war from Russia; but her preparations were yet far from being completed, and she was still engaged in hostilities with Turkey. Even at this period, however, it thus appears that she had a formidable army, which, had she been hurried into the contest, might have enabled her to meet it without very great apprehension. Her whole force in infantry consisted of more than 300,000 men; her cavalry amounted to 40,000, in addition to which there were 50,000 cossacks, and a numerous militia rapidly organising. But one hundred thousand of her best soldiers would at this period have been unavailing in any contest with France; they were employed against the Turks and Persians, and in watching the movements of Sweden. Delay was, therefore, of great importance to Russia; and it was, perhaps, of no less importance to her enemies.

Buonaparte had been more urgent and imperious in his demands than active in his preparations. In 1811, he had about 60,000 men in Germany, including the garrisons of Stettin, Custrin, and Glogau; from the duchy of Warsaw he might have drawn about the same number; while the confederation of the Rhine, whose contingent was 100,000 men, could not at this time have supplied more than the half of that number. By the spring of the following year, however, the French armies had been greatly augmented; the troops of the confederation had been raised to the stipulated quota, and the kings of Saxony and Naples had been compelled to prepare for embarking in the great enterprise against Russia. The armies which Buonaparte had thus assembled on the frontiers of Russian Poland, amounted, by the most moderate computation, to upwards of 400,000 men, and by other accounts to upwards of 600,000,* in a state of the highest discipline and equipment, accustomed

* "The following statement is presumed to be the most accurate, as it is taken from the French official documents of last year. The French official details have again and again informed us, that the 9th and 11th corps, acting as reserves under Belluno (Victor) and Castiglione (Augereau), were 30,000 strong each at the beginning of the cam-

to victory, and commanded by the first military talents of the age.

Such were the mighty preparations made on each side. They corresponded to the greatness of the interests which were at issue; the Russians were about to contend for their very existence as an independent nation; the French, on the other hand, were now to aim a blow which should bring the whole continent of Europe under their dominion. In numbers the combatants were not at first on a footing of equality; and in discipline, in science, in the organisation of the army, the French had a marked superiority. The whole resources of a mighty empire, pre-eminent in civilization, yet devoted to war, had been exhausted; every aid which experience and skill could give in the application of these resources had been contributed; the accumulated means and varied talents which twenty years of successful war had created, were concentrated in this formidable host. It was composed of soldiers grown old in victory, or of the successors of those who had perished in the midst of triumphs; and all were animated by the lively enthusiasm, so characteristic of that people, and so natural to the circumstances in which the army was now placed. Their courage, the result of this enthusiasm, prompted by vague aspirings after military glory, and sustained by feelings of devotion to their country, promised great enterprise and temerity in the outset of the campaign; an enterprise which had often triumphed over the supineness of their enemies, and a temerity which had more than once given the imposing aspect of superior genius and power to frantic daring and extravagance. The fatal influence of that intrigue which had purchased so many conquests to France, formed an important item in the calculation of her present fortunes; and all these circumstances, thus combined, seemed to bestow upon her councils and armies many important advantages over those of the enemy.

The Russians possessed other advantages for the approaching contest, which may seem almost to have overbalanced those of the enemy. They had been driven into a state of warfare by

paign, though afterwards increased; and we may fairly conclude, that those which were to be engaged in immediate service were at least equally complete, if not more.... The total force would therefore stand thus, and the subsequent losses shew that this statement must be tolerably correct:—

9 corps Infantry, 30,000 each,		270,000
9th corps Victor's Reserve,	-	45,000
11th do. Augereau's do.	-	60,000
5 Divisions Cavalry, under Murat,		50,000
Imperial Guards, Infantry,	-	30,000
Garrison of Dantzic,	-	20,000
Austrian Contingent,	-	30,000
Polish Troops, Deserters from Russia,		20,000
Polish Levies,	-	
Effective Men,	-	565,000
Followers of various descriptions,	-	50,000
		615,000

Vide "Statement of the ... of Russia," &c. by James M'Queen, Glasgow, 1812.

the necessity of defending their country from a foreign yoke; they had made every concession which justice and policy demanded, and it was almost certain, therefore, that the people would be animated by the most furious and desperate courage. They had few distinguished generals, but they had many men of bold and vigorous minds, who required only the strange combination of circumstances, which Buonaparte was hastening, to draw forth their natural talents. The military art, it has been often remarked, requires not the highest gifts, either of the head or heart; and barbarous nations in general possess a great deal more of that species of talent which qualifies a man for the conduct of a fierce and obstinate contest, than their more polished neighbours. The Russian generals might be defective in science, but they possessed, in great perfection, all the characteristics of patient, daring, and intrepid soldiers. In their natural and personal qualifications—in courage and perseverance, they excelled their antagonists; and it was to be hoped, that a protracted struggle would bestow on them that experience in which they might at first be deficient. The Russian soldiers had long maintained a very high character; if they were less active than the French, they were far more resolute and steady; if their onset might be less hasty and vigorous, they could sustain the conflict with more firmness and determination; if they had less discipline, they had more native courage; if they could not rally so fast, neither would they be so soon thrown into disorder; if they had not, in the present instance, the hopes of conquest to animate them, they had a sense of duty, the feelings of patriotism, and the sanctions of religion to confirm their native bravery. The Russian soldier was never known to abandon the post committed to his charge—to disobey the commands of his superiors, or to disregard the calls of religion and patriotism in the hour of danger. The fear of death never invaded his breast; the wretched sophistry which would have made him indifferent to the fate of his country, was too subtle for his honest mind; the impiety, which in the more civilized states of Europe has threatened to unhinge society, had never penetrated the remote regions which he delighted to call his home. The Russian government thus possessed the most powerful resources of defence in the genius, condition, and character of the people—in their native bravery—their passive obedience—their devoted patriotism, and their amiable superstition. Had a general and decisive battle been risked at the beginning, the science and discipline of the enemy might indeed have prevailed, but the triumph would have been achieved only after the most severe loss, and the progress of the enemy would have been over the dead bodies of the Russians. With a population so brave and persevering, that nothing could overcome its resistance—a country so extended, that a million of soldiers would have been unable to retain even military possession of it, and an army, which in numbers was nearly equal, in courage superior, and in discipline alone inferior, to the enemy, there seemed to be but little chance that the French would succeed in their enterprise.

Before entering upon hostilities, to which Buonaparte seemed in this instance more than usually reluctant, he addressed, through his minister for foreign relations, various remonstrances to the Russian government. Russia, he said, had violated the treaty of Tilsit; that treaty, the principles of which she had solemnly espoused in her declaration of war against England. So soon as the ukase of the Russian government, permitting the importation of British goods under neutral flags

had been issued, the treaty of Tilsit was at an end. The Emperor of Russia had forgotten all that he owed to the clemency and magnanimity of the French government. The seizure of Oldenburgh was necessary to the continental system; but Russia, in contempt of her solemn obligations, had resisted this seizure, had remonstrated against it, and had even gone so far as to dissuade the duke from accepting the indemnity which France was willing to have bestowed on him. These events occurred in 1810, but in 1811 the real designs of Russia, said her enemy, became still more apparent. The Russian armies, raised and supported at an enormous expence, now threatened the army of the duchy of Warsaw, which was compelled to repass the Vistula, although at this very moment all the French troops were within the Rhine, excepting 40,000 men stationed at Hamburgh to preserve the public tranquillity. These preparations could have but one object; yet the French emperor, still unwilling to believe that Russia would again commit herself in a struggle with France, proposed an arrangement which should have been satisfactory. The independence of the duchy of Warsaw, as stipulated by the treaty of Tilsit—the annexation of Oldenburgh, which the war with England had rendered indispensable, and which the spirit, if not the letter, of the treaty of Tilsit prescribed—the recall of the ukase of 1810, and the enactment of clear and efficient laws against trade in English goods, and with denationalized vessels, were the conditions on which Buonaparte was still desirous of coming to a good understanding with Russia. Had the independence of the duchy of Warsaw been acknowledged, Buonaparte would have bound himself to attempt nothing for the freedom of the Poles; he would have consented even to the interference of Russia in favour of the Duke of Oldenburgh, who, as a member of the confederation of the Rhine, was under the protection of France alone, and he would have acceded even to such a modification of the continental system, as the necessary wants of Russia should seem to demand; but the course pursued by Russia indicated clearly that she wished not to secure the independence of the duchy of Warsaw, but to seize upon it herself; that she cared not about the Duke of Oldenburgh, except as she might make his affairs a pretext for quarrelling with France; and that it was not her own commerce she wished to cherish, but the alliance of England, which she was desirous of cultivating.

To these groundless accusations Russia could have no difficulty in replying. Some doubts, however, seem still to have hung over the mind of the Emperor Alexander; and great as his preparations had been, great as was the necessity for dissolving his ominous alliance with France, he yet hesitated to commit every thing to the decision of the sword. Buonaparte, in the meantime, took care to strengthen the cause of his enemies by some acts of unequivocal violence and perfidy; for, instead of evacuating Prussia, he occupied in greater force than before those parts of it from which Russian Poland could be most advantageously assailed, and then proceeded to seize Swedish Pomerania.—The Russian ambassador, in his reply, availed himself of these circumstances; he observed, that the real, and not the nominal, neutrality of Prussia, was indispensable to the security of the Russian empire; that the sincerity of France in her pretended alliance with the latter power was more than questionable, while this important article of the treaty of Tilsit remained unperformed, and while the Russian frontier was thus at all times exposed to the incur-

sions of the enemy. Russia, however, was still desirous of cultivating friendly relations with France; and should Buonaparte instantly recognise the independence of the Prussian states, and faithfully evacuate the fortresses, diminish the garrison of Dantzic, restore Swedish Pomerania, and come to a satisfactory arrangement with Sweden, the Russian government would agree to maintain the continental system throughout its dominions, to modify the custom-house duties agreeably to the desire of France, and rest satisfied with the indemnity which France might offer for the duchy of Oldenburgh. While adhering to the principle of the continental system, however, she claimed a right of trading by licence agreeably to the practice of France herself, —a most reasonable demand, which even the usual arrogance of Buonaparte could scarcely have resisted.—The strain of this reply shewed that the Russian government had not yet adopted with firmness the line of policy which it ultimately determined to pursue towards the French ruler.

No answer was made by France to this remonstrance on the part of Russia, and the scenes which followed are very characteristic of Buonaparte and his government. He set off with his minister to join the army; the Russian ambassador of course applied for passports, and Buonaparte had the effrontery to declare, that this step "decided the rupture." Before he quitted Paris, the usual report on the state of France had been laid before him by his minister for foreign affairs, in which the approaching war with Russia was descanted upon with much formality. New charges against Russia were made in this document; it was asserted that in the fatal Austrian war of 1809, the Russian contingent of auxiliary troops had not been brought forward.—It now appeared more manifest than ever, that the continental system, and the humiliation of England, formed the great incitements to the enterprise on which Buonaparte was about to enter.—A nominal treaty with Prussia, whose resources were already at the disposal of France, and a new treaty with Austria, in which that power engaged to contribute 30,000 men to support the war with Russia, and recognized the principles of the treaty of Utrecht, were also presented on this occasion.—Nothing but the deep degradation of Austria was manifested in these unworthy compliances.

On the 9th of May Buonaparte set out from St Cloud, and on the 6th of June he passed the Vistula. On the 22d of the same month he issued a formal declaration of war against Russia; and in the address to his soldiers, which accompanied it, he gave full scope to his natural arrogance. He accused Russia of breaking her alliance with France at the instigation of England. He dared to pronounce that she was dragged on by fatality, and that her destinies must be accomplished. He promised his soldiers that the second campaign of Poland would be no less glorious than the first; that the peace which he should conclude would be its own guarantee, and that Russia should for ever be excluded from exerting the unnatural influence which she had too long maintained in the affairs of Europe.—It was remarked by an illustrious Englishman, who had an opportunity of judging of Buonaparte's real character, by frequent intercourse with him, that his talents were not of the very first order, but that the intoxication produced by unexpected success was visible in his whole deportment. His style, characterized chiefly by a laborious effort to reach the sublime, seems, in some measure, to favour the opinion; and never, surely, was this false elevation more apparent than on the present occasion. For his past successes

he had been much indebted to accident, and to the imbecillity of his opponents; he was incapable of comprehending the character of his new enemies, and therefore he hastily pronounced, that they were dragged on by that fatality which was fast precipitating his own ruin.—On the 24th of June he passed the Niemen, and entered the Russian territory, little expecting that he was soon to return as a fugitive from the wreck of a great army, on which he was destined to bring all the horrors that can be inflicted on suffering humanity.

The plan of defence which the Russians had decided upon was well adapted to the circumstances of the country, and the character of the army and of the people.—A general battle was to be avoided, because the superior discipline and tactics of the enemy must, in such a conflict, have given him many advantages. His progress was, however, to be retarded by a bold resistance at all points where a stand could easily be made, without committing the armies in a general engagement. The country, so far as the invader might be enabled to penetrate, was to be laid waste; every thing useful to an army was to be destroyed or removed; and a scene of desolation to be presented on all sides. Should the enemy, in such circumstances, dare to advance into the heart of the country, it must have been manifest that he could do so only after encountering numerous obstacles, and sustaining severe losses; and when he should reach the interior he would find himself weak and exhausted, his numbers diminished, and his supplies entirely cut off. Should he be mad enough to linger in the interior for any length of time, the approach of winter would seal his fate; he must be compelled to retreat from a scene of famine and devastation; his benumbed and exhausted legions would then fall an easy prey to their pursuers.—The execution of such a plan as this required, indeed, great forbearance and self-command on the part of the Russian army, the most entire devotion from the people, and extreme rashness on the part of the enemy; yet all these qualities were in the sequel manifested by the different parties, to a degree which surpassed even the most sanguine expectation. Had Buonaparte been more cautious in advancing, the struggle might have been protracted for another campaign; had the Russian army been as impetuous as it was intrepid, the result of a general engagement might have deferred the hopes of Russia; and had the people hesitated about the unparalleled sacrifices which were required of them, the cause of European independence might have sought in vain the powerful aid of the Russian empire.

How far the Russians should have advanced to meet their invaders,—whether they should have approached the Niemen, or made their first stand in front of their entrenchments on the Dwina, has been the subject of some difference of opinion. There could be no reason, it would seem, for their advance to any point which they did not purpose for a season at least to defend; yet although they did approach the Niemen, they made no resistance to the passage of that river by the French. On the 25th of June, the day after Buonaparte had crossed the river, Koono fell without resistance; and it is thus impossible to account for the advance of the Russians to the extremity of the empire, without supposing, that they originally intended to prepare for making a stand at this place; and that the rapidity of the enemy's movements rendered this impracticable. Had the Russian army at once taken a position in front of their strong and connected fortifications on the Dwina, they might have avoided the serious

error of a weak and extended line, and would have saved the necessity of a sudden retreat. The extension of their line seemed at first to have given the enemy very great advantages; he crossed the Niemen without resistance; penetrated to Wilna and Minsk, and indulged the hope, that by thus separating the divisions of the Russian army which were posted to the south of the line which connects these places, he might secure all the advantages of attacking his enemies in detail, to which he had on former occasions been so much indebted. But in this expectation he was wholly disappointed; and if the Russian generals at first committed an error, they made ample compensation for it by the ability and skill of their subsequent movements.

The Emperor Alexander was still at Wilna. Buonaparte, therefore, pushed on with great rapidity, and on the 28th of June, made himself master of the capital of Russian Poland.—What were his hopes and expectations at this moment it is not difficult to conjecture. It might seem a proud circumstance to him, that he had compelled the Russian emperor to retire upon his approach; and he might imagine, that his rapid entrance would create consternation, and frighten his enemies into submission. The love of artifice, and the affectation of magnanimity, seduced him into declarations when he reached Wilna, which, in the issue, rendered his duplicity more apparent. He knew the enmity which the Poles entertained towards Russia, and he therefore counted on their aid in his invasion. Unfortunately for the character of the Poles he was not disappointed; for in spite of his conspicuous want of good faith, and his frequent violations of it, even in the case of Poland, they were again seduced by his promises, that he would restore their constitution and independence. Yet he scrupled not to make a reservation, in this act of pretended beneficence, of the interests of Austria, because she was now his ally in the Russian war; and he had not many months before offered to Russia herself to abandon Poland to its fate, if he had been allowed to keep possession of the duchy of Warsaw. The Poles must have been fully aware of all this, yet on the mere restoration of a nominal independence, they embarked with eagerness in the war against Russia, and cast their strength into the scale of a despot, who threatened to extinguish liberty throughout Europe. Their just hatred towards Russia can alone account for such infatuation; but France herself has never inflicted, because it was impossible to inflict, greater evils, than those which Poland had already suffered from Russia. In what light soever these proceedings may be viewed, it is incontestable that the Poles yielded to the seductions of Buonaparte, who, upon entering Wilna, proclaimed the independence of Poland, assembled a diet, and bestowed on the Polish nation the shadow of liberty.

The French armies, meanwhile, advanced; but instead of following the Russians to the Dwina, whither they had retired, they spread themselves out towards the south. They had two objects in view by this movement; to cut off the second corps of the Russian army under Prince Bagration, which was already separated from the first, and to turn the Russian entrenchments on the Dwina, which they wished to avoid storming.—The bulletins which Buonaparte was in the habit of issuing in the course of his campaigns, have been read with avidity throughout Europe; and never were they so interesting as they had now become. But already they began to change their character; no

victories were gained; no cannon or colours, and very few prisoners had been taken from the enemy, in the course of a long and eager pursuit. Already the Russian climate had begun its ravages upon his army; his horses perished in thousands; his artillery was buried in the mud; and the desolating system of Russian warfare even now intimated to him what he might expect in his future operations.

So soon as the Emperor Alexander became acquainted with the nature of the movements made by the enemy, he issued orders to the different divisions of the Russian army, that they should re-unite at Drissa, where a strong entrenched camp had been formed. The divisions of the army were at this time scattered over a wide extent of country; the vast frontiers which they had to defend, and the uncertainty of the point to which the enemy might direct his attack, had rendered this necessary. The whole Russian force was broken into two great divisions, one of which was called the *first*, the other the *second army*.—Before the evacuation of Wilna, the four divisions of the *first army*, which was commanded in chief by General Barclay de Tolly, were thus distributed:—The right of the first division, consisting of 30,000 men, commanded by Count Wittgenstein, was posted betwixt Chawli and Vilkomie, considerably to the north of Wilna. The second division of 25,000 men, commanded by General Baggavout, had evacuated Kowna on the approach of the enemy, and was now stationed at Schervintz, betwixt Vilkomie and Wilna. The third and fourth divisions, consisting of upwards of 50,000 men, under Generals Schouvaloff and Touchkoff, stretched betwixt Nortcoki and Lida to the south of Wilna.—The *second army* consisting of 60,000 men, commanded in chief by Prince Bagration, was partly stationed at Bialisock and Wilkowisk, a great way farther to the south. From this army General Dochtoroff's division had already been detached; and a part of it occupied Grodno.—A corps of observation of 25,000 men was left under General Tormozoff at Loutzk, and another of 20,000 under Generals Essen and Steingel, defended Riga. It is manifest from this disposition of the Russians, that the occupation of Wilna by Buonaparte gave him a chance of separating the first and second Russian armies.

It was difficult to re-unite an army thus divided; but no sooner was the order for this junction made, than all the different corps were in motion. Wittgenstein advanced from Vilkomic on Breslaw; the reserve of guards marched forward towards the Dwina; and it seemed that the communications had been nearly re-established.—General Dochtoroff was eagerly followed by the enemy, and had several affairs during his retreat with the corps of Soult, Borde, Nansouty, and Pajol, whom he continually repulsed.—On the 4th of July, he reached Brodno, secured his passage of the Dwina, and his junction with the main army.—On the 6th, the rear-guard of the right of the army, under Generals Korff and Kutusoff, was attacked near the Dwina by the troops of Murat, supported by a strong corps of flying artillery under General Montbrun. The enemy was received, however, with bravery, and quickly repulsed by the Cossacks of the guards, who took some prisoners, among whom was the Prince Hohenloe Kirchberg, in the service of the King of Wirtemburg. The Russians then passed the river without molestation, and destroyed the bridges; and on the 8th of July, the main body of the first army crossed

the Dwina at Dinaburg. On the 9th, most of the divisions entered the entrenched camp at Drissa; these important movements were accomplished, and the schemes of the enemy in a great measure defeated.—The proclamation which was at this time addressed to them by the emperor, shews how difficult it had been to restrain the courage of the soldiers, and to prevent them from precipitating a general battle, which might have disconcerted the whole plan of the campaign.

The divisions of the first army had been thus re-assembled without loss. The movements of Prince Bagration were attended with greater difficulty, and much blame has been thrown on the Russian general in chief, for leaving the commander of the second army for some time in ignorance of his projected movements.—So soon as Prince Bagration became acquainted with the general plan, he ordered Platoff, with his Cossacks, to advance upon Grodno, and thus protect the movements of the main body, with which he proceeded towards Wilna. But he soon learned that the French were already spread over his line of march, and that he would be able to unite with the right of the army in this direction only after very great sacrifices. He therefore retraced his steps, and directed his march towards Minsk; but he learned that here also he had been anticipated, and that Davoust was already in possession of the place. His situation had now become critical and embarrassing in the extreme; but with that presence of mind which never deserts a brave and able man, he instantly resolved on marching towards Sloutsk, in the hope that he might afterwards proceed by Mohiloff towards Vitepsk, and there accomplish the object of all his exertions.

The route on which he now determined was very circuitous, and his progress was attended with much hazard. To cover his movements, Platoff with his Cossacks and light artillery left Grodno, and passed towards Mire. This movement of the gallant Cossack chief probably saved the second Russian army.—On the 7th of July, Platoff was met by the advanced guard of the French army, under Jerome Buonaparte, which was repulsed with great slaughter. The next day Platoff occupied the suburbs of Mire, and was again assailed by a still greater force, under the Polish chief Rominsky. In the sanguinary affair which succeeded, the enemy was overpowered; three entire regiments of Polish Hulans were cut to pieces; their commander alone escaped.—The loss of the Russians was also severe.—But their indefatigable leader had fresh obstacles to encounter; for he no sooner directed his troops towards Romanoff, than he was again attacked by an enemy still more formidable. He once more prevailed, however, after an obstinate engagement, in which the first regiment of *chasseurs a cheval*, and the *grenadiers a cheval*, were cut to pieces. Two colonels, 16 inferior officers, and 300 men were made prisoners in this affair, and after having pursued the enemy for three leagues, the Cossacks returned to Mohiloff, to maintain their communication with the second army, which was moving on this place by forced marches.

The French ruler having little to boast of in his past operations, broke out about this period in the following strain of arrogance and derision:—"Ten days after the opening of the campaign," said he, "our advanced posts are upon the banks of the Dwina! Almost all Lithuania, a country containing four millions of inhabitants, is conquered: the movements of the army commenced on the Vistula;

the projects of the emperor were then revealed; and there was not an instant to be lost in putting them into execution. The Russians are engaged in concentrating their forces at Drissa; they announced a determination there to await our approach, and give us battle. They now talk of fighting, after having abandoned, without a stroke, their Polish possessions. Perhaps they adopted that peaceful mode of evacuation as an act of justice, by way of making some restitution to a country which they had acquired neither by treaty nor by the right of conquest." Well might the Russians have answered, "We abandoned Lithuania that we may re-possess ourselves of it with greater certainty at no very distant period—that we may draw you into that snare on which you run so eagerly—that we may bring you into a position where the whole force of a great empire, which you have dared to invade, may overwhelm you without the power of escaping; and we have given you access to the Polish possessions, that you may there, in the face of all Europe, exhibit the last memorable scene of your perfidy."—The Russians, unmoved by the threats or promises of the enemy, in the mean time, followed their own plans with steadiness and success.

The first army of the Russians was concentrated in the entrenched camp at Drissa, and the second was proceeding with desperate resolution to join it at some point in the rear. Till this junction was effected, it would have been imprudent to have risked a general battle even at Drissa, against the whole strength of the enemy, which was now directed towards that position.—It now seems to have been the intention of the enemy to attack the right of the main army, and to force the works on the Dwina. Marshal Oudinot, therefore, approached Dinabourg; and on the morning of the 18th, attacked the bridge where some works had been constructed. He was gallantly repulsed by the Russians; and although the attack was renewed the following day, the enemy was again driven back with so much vigour, that he was compelled to abandon his enterprise.—Count Wittgenstein, who has borne so conspicuous a part in the events of the last two years, began about this time to distinguish himself. He observed that the enemy's posts on the opposite bank of the river were negligently guarded; he instantly ordered a flying bridge to be constructed, and sent across the regiment of Grodno, with a few squadrons of Cossacks, who executed his plans with such effect, that the enemy was surprised, attacked, and driven back with considerable loss. Sebastiani had the misfortune to command during this rencontre; and to save the reputation of the general and of his army, the numbers of the assailants were as usual prodigiously exaggerated by the French bulletins.—The result of these operations was, that the enemy abandoned altogether his project of forcing the Russian entrenched camp, and determined to push forward to Vitepsk, on which Beauharnois, Davoust, and Mortier, were already moving. The Russian left at the same time made a rapid movement on Polotsk; and the commander-in-chief finally resolved to retire on Smolensko, where it was hoped that a junction might at last be formed with the second army.

The Russians were aware that their whole force, even when united, must be inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, who, besides, with his usual activity, was at this moment organising large reinforcements under Marshals Augereau and Victor.—The dye was now cast; and the Russian government was determined not only to wait

the issue with firmness, but to put forth the whole strength of the empire to ensure success. Proclamations were issued to rouse the people to arms, and no attempt was made to conceal the danger with which the country was threatened, because there was no wish on the part of the Emperor of Russia for compromise or submission. "The enemy," says the proclamation to the city of Moscow, "with unparalleled perfidy, and a force equal to his boundless ambition, has passed the frontiers of Russia; his design is the ruin of our country; the Russian armies burn with impatience to throw themselves upon his battalions, and chastise, at the expence of their lives, this treacherous invader. But our paternal tenderness for our faithful subjects will not allow of so desperate a sacrifice: we will not suffer our brave soldiers to bleed on the altars of this Moloch. We must meet him in the field man to man, in equal combat; he for his ambition—we for our country. Fully informed of the malignant intentions of our enemy, and of the ample means with which he has provided himself to execute these intentions, we do not hesitate to declare to our people the danger in which the empire is placed, and to call upon them to disappoint, by their patriotic exertions, the advantages which the invader now hopes to gain by our present inferiority of numbers. Necessity commands that we should assemble a new force in the interior, to support that which is now to face the enemy, and determined to perish or remain a barrier between him and the liberties of their country." The emperor then addressed himself to the loyalty of the people of Moscow—to the sentiments of patriotism, and to the enthusiasm of religion, which, over the Russians, exercise so despotic a sway.—The address to the nation at large contained some remarkable passages, which discovered the deep hatred entertained by the Russian chiefs towards their faithless enemy. "The enemy has passed our frontiers, and carries his army into the interior of Russia. Since perfidy could not destroy an empire which has existed with increasing dignity for so many ages, he has determined to assail it by force; and to storm the dominions of the Czars with the collected powers of continental Europe. With perfidy in his heart, and fidelity on his lips, he courts the credulous ear, and seeks to bind the empire in chains. But Russia penetrates his wiles: the way of truth is open before her; she has invoked the protection of God. She opposes to the machinations of her enemy, an army vehement in courage, and eager to drive from her territory a race that burdens the earth; and to whom that earth would refuse a grave in her outraged bosom. We call for armies sufficient to annihilate this enemy. Our soldiers now in arms are bold; but we disguise not from our loyal subjects that the dauntless courage of our warriors requires to be supported by an interior line of troops. The means ought to be proportioned to the end; and the end before us is to overwhelm a tyrant who would overwhelm all the world. Wherever in this empire he may advance, we are assured he will meet heroes ready to rise against his treachery; to disdain his flattery and his falsehood, and with the indignation of insulted virtue, to trample upon his gold; and palsy by the touch of true honour, his enslaved legions. In each Russian nobleman he will find a Pogarskoi; in each ecclesiastic a Porlitz; and in each peasant a Minim."—These sentiments were worthy of the Russian emperor, and of the great cause in which he was engaged. They summoned forth the energies and patriotism of the people

in language to which they could not be deaf; and they were answered accordingly by the devoted enthusiasm of all Russia. Soldiers were raised—men of all ages and of all ranks were zealous in the service of their country, and those who could not render their personal assistance, were liberal in their contributions to the wants of the state. A people with these sentiments, and guided by men of ordinary firmness and capacity, could never be conquered.

The emperor left his army, and hastened to Moscow, that he might accelerate the preparations which were required by the exigencies of the moment. He was received in this great city with all the marks of regard which could be bestowed by a loyal people, whose affection for their emperor was increased by the solemn and awful circumstances which had led to his appearance among them. A deputation of the nobles waited on him, to report as to the amount of the force which they proposed to raise and equip for the public service. The city and government of Moscow alone engaged to furnish 100,000 men; and the other Russian governments, according to their population, expressed their eagerness to follow this memorable example. If the Russians are savages, as we have been so often told, the finest virtues of our nature, the love of country, and hatred of a foreign yoke, seem, in a pre-eminent degree, to be the virtues of savage life. The patriotism of Moscow might put to shame the cold selfishness of capitals which boast their philosophy and refinement.

The pious superstition of the Russians has been remarked as one of the most singular features of their character. It was to be expected that this powerful string would not be left untouched at so great a crisis; the emperor, in the addresses which he had already issued, made strong appeals to this sacred principle; and he was most zealously seconded in these appeals by his clergy. "Let us," said the holy synod in its address to the people, "let us in the hour of danger array ourselves in the panoply of a holy courage; and, Russians, that hour is come; an enemy, ambitious and insatiable, violating every sacred oath, and every bond of honour, forced himself into the bosom of your country. Despising the holy altars, while uttering the language of hypocrisy; breathing words of tender humanity, while his deeds are those of cruelty and murder, approaching countries with the blandishment of friendship, and entering them with fire and sword, famine, pestilence, and death, in his train; such is the tyrant we call upon you to oppose." After appealing to the higher orders, and reminding them of the glory of their ancestors, the address proceeds, "Above all, we sound the trumpet unto you, ye ministers of the holy altar. By the example of Moses, who, on the day of battle with Amalek, withdrew not his hands stretched forth unto the Lord; clasp yours in ardent prayer, until the arms of the adversary have lost their strength, and he cry aloud unto the victors for mercy and for peace. Inspire our warriors with a firm hope in the God of armies. Fortify, by the words of truth, men of feeble minds, whom ignorance exposes to the artifices of imposture. Instruct every order, both by precept and action, to respect, above all things, their faith and their country. And should one of the sons of the priesthood, who may not have been yet consecrated to the sanctuary, burn with zeal to grasp the sword of patriotism, do ye bless him in the name of the church, and let him follow the filial impulse."—The following memorable

advice which was given in this address, even at the moment when the fury of the Russians may be supposed to have been at its height, should teach their enemies to talk with more respect and moderation of this calumniated people. "Soldiers, while we thus call you to the field of honour, we exhort, we supplicate you never to forget that it is also the field of justice. Abstain from all actions unworthy your great cause. Abhor every disorder or license that would bring down on your heads the wrath of a Being who is not more the God of retribution than the God of mercy. We recommend to you the love of your neighbour, and the love of concord, &c."—It is almost needless to add that these energetic appeals had the desired effect. The whole Russian empire was now united in defence of its independence. The casualties in the regular army were immediately supplied, and its numbers increased by volunteers who crowded in from all quarters; and already did the invader perceive that in Russia he was about to meet with a resistance which he had never before encountered, and which in the madness of his ambition he had wholly overlooked.

The Russian general-in-chief had determined to abandon Drissa, and to retire towards Smolensk; on the 19th of July, therefore, he broke up from the entrenched camp, and marched upon Polotsk and Vitepsk; he reached the latter place on the 24th. Wittgenstein, in the meantime, was left to occupy the ground to the north of Drissa, to protect the road to St Petersburgh, and to keep in check the corps under Macdonald and Oudinot.—The greatest uncertainty still prevailed as to the movements of the second army, under Prince Bagration, from which no intelligence had for some time been received; and it was manifestly the object of the invader to push forward with the greatest rapidity towards Smolensko, and to prevent that junction which had already cost so many efforts.—The situation of the Russian general-in-chief was thus embarrassing in the extreme; nor could he take any step towards checking the advance of the enemy, except by making demonstrations for a general battle. The concentration of the French forces gave the enemy great advantages; it enabled him to push forward, regardless of his antagonists, and to meet them with many chances in his favour, wherever they might choose to make a stand. Yet no alternative seemed to be left to the Russian general but to risk an engagement, even in the very unfavourable circumstances to which he had been reduced.

That he might choose the ground with more advantage for this great struggle, and ascertain the position and strength of the enemy, General Barclay de Tolly sent out reconnoitring parties, and afterwards dispatched Count Osterman to keep the enemy in check. General Dochtoroff was at the same time posted on the right bank of the Dwina, with orders to check the enemy's advance.—On the 25th of July, the corps under Osterman was in motion; and three versts in advance of Ostrovno, they fell in with a large body of the enemy's cavalry, who fought with bravery, but were ultimately compelled to give way. The Russians, too impetuous in following up this success, were in their turn repulsed; and on the following day the viceroy of Italy, powerfully reinforced by Murat's cavalry, renewed the attack. The Russians had their right on the Dwina, their centre on the great road leading to Vitepsk, and their left covered by a wood, of which the French made vigorous efforts to get possession. On this point, as well as on the centre and right, they were ultimately driven back with great slaughter; but, as the contest was bravely and obstinately main-

tained on both sides, the loss of the Russians was not less severe. Three or 4000 on each side were killed and wounded.—Count Osterman determined on re-uniting himself with the grand army; but in order that time might be afforded to the commander-in-chief to profit by what had passed, and to make his arrangements for the battle which now seemed inevitable, Lieutenant-General Konovitz was left with a small party still to check the advance of the enemy, which he accomplished in so gallant a manner, that although, during the whole of the 27th, he had to resist the assaults of the French, yet did he not give way till he and his followers were recalled during the night to join the grand army.

The Russian army waited with impatience for the moment which was to bring their prowess into fair trial with that of the enemy in a general battle.—When every thing seemed to be prepared for this great struggle, the plans of the general-in-chief were changed by the receipt of intelligence from Bagration, who had found Mohilof in possession of the French, and had therefore determined to retire by another route upon Smolensk. Barclay de Tolly took his measures accordingly; he determined not to hazard a battle till he had reached Smolensk, and he communicated this resolution to Prince Bagration, while he, at the same time, sent orders to Platoff to put himself in advance of that city, and cover the movements of the army.

The first army was now divided into three columns, which moved towards Smolensk. Count Pahlen was entrusted with the command of the corps which was to protect this movement; he distributed his force on the banks of a small river, where he was repeatedly attacked without success; and he afterwards occupied the great road, where he constructed a battery, which made such havoc among the French cavalry, that they soon relinquished the pursuit. The French, having reached Vitepsk, determined to remain there till they should recover, in some measure, from the unusual fatigues and privations which they already began to experience.—The bulletins of Buonaparte boasted much, about this time, of the excellent state of his troops, and imputed the pause, which was so strangely made at Vitepsk, to the *excessive heat* of the Russian climate at this season of the year. It was easy to penetrate this thin disguise; while the delay which the necessities of his situation now imposed on the French ruler, might have proved to him irretrievable.

While the grand armies on each side were thus reduced to inactivity, the one that it might enjoy some repose, and the other that it might add to its strength by the powerful aid of the second Russian army, Count Witgenstein was well employed in the neighbourhood of Polotsk. Macdonald, with part of his corps, had crossed the Dwina, in the hope of joining Oudinot; and flattered himself that he would thus be able to cut off the communication of Witgenstein with St Peterburgh.—On the 11th of August, Witgenstein encountered a detachment of Oudinot's cavalry, from one of whom he learned that the French marshal had formed the project of advancing on the capital. The Russians, however, defeated his plan, and compelled Oudinot to retire upon Polotsk, where he was joined by some Wirtemburgh and Bavarian troops, under the command of General Gouvion St Cyr. Thus reinforced, Oudinot once more resumed his project of marching on the Russian capital; but the penetration of Witgenstein again anticipated his movements. The Russian general advanced with rapidity; but, expert and daring as were his movements, he could not surprise his able adversary, whom he found pre-

pared at all points to give him battle. The arrangements of the French general were masterly; but they availed not against the courage of the Russians, who bore down upon him with such fury, that, after a brave resistance, which lasted for more than six hours, they succeeded in repulsing him, and remained masters of the field. Witgenstein next day resumed his operations; and Oudinot had improved the few hours of darkness by which the conflict was interrupted, in the manner which might have been expected of an able general. The contest was again maintained with severe loss on the side of the enemy till midnight; but on the third day the Russian general wholly overthrew the French, and drove the fugitives, who escaped from the field of battle, to seek shelter in the French lines before Polotsk.—The loss of the enemy, in these obstinate and sanguinary engagements, was estimated at 5000 killed and wounded, and 3000 prisoners, besides artillery, baggage, and ammunition waggons. The Russians confess a loss of 2000 men, officers and privates, among the former of whom was General Kouluff.—The army of Oudinot was thus dispersed; and as Count Witgenstein, from whom the official report of this victory was received, has since become an officer of distinguished celebrity, it may not be uninteresting to quote the description which he gives of the heroic resolution displayed by his soldiers in this the first affair of importance which they had with the enemy on their own soil.—"During the three days of attack," says he, "the corps I have the honour to command performed prodigies of valour. Their resolution was not to be shaken; and their ardour, like a devouring flame, consumed all before it. The particular acts of their dauntless and persevering heroism I can neither describe nor sufficiently praise. The artillery and the bayonet were equally the instruments of their zeal; for where the one fell short of the mark, the other was pushed with a resolution that overthrew whole ranks of the enemy. Even the most solid columns of infantry and batteries of cannon were compelled to give way to the intrepid motions of our troops."—It was the intention of Witgenstein to have next attacked Macdonald; but as that marshal had already begun his retreat, the Russian chief determined to remain in front of the enemy's lines at Polotsk.

During these events the march of the second army of the Russians was continued with unceasing activity. At Bobrousk, Prince Bagration crossed the Berezina, and hoped, by keeping the right bank of the river, to reach Mohiloff without interruption from the enemy. On the 22d, his advanced guard, while proceeding on the road to Mohiloff, was opposed by a strong body of the enemy's chasseurs, through whom they cut their way. The Russians soon learned that they had been engaged with the advance of the division of the grand army under Davoust and Mortier, who occupied Mohiloff and the country around. There seemed to be but one resource left for the second Russian army,—to cut its way, at all hazards, through the enemy; and this resolution was instantly adopted.

And here it may be remarked, that the genius and courage of the contending parties shone forth with great lustre in the conduct of this memorable retreat. The first disunion of the Russian armies may have been unwise; but their subsequent efforts to retrieve this false step, if it really was such, must extort the highest praise. The skill and valour of the enemy also merit great applause; the object which he had in view was of great moment to the issue of the campaign; he pursued it steadily and skilfully;

at all points he met and endeavoured to disconcert the plans of the Russians, and was foiled at last but by a valour and constancy which seemed irresistible. It is true, he was far superior in numbers; but the nature of his operations required the presence of his armies at all points by which the enemy could retire. Nor must it be forgotten, that the progress of the Russians was through a country well known to them, and well disposed to render them any assistance which they might require; while the advance of the French was over a country in which every man felt for them the most deadly hatred.—The admirable dispositions and sustained efforts of the enemy must yet be recounted before we conduct Bagration and his army to the neighbourhood of Smolensk, which it had been the great object of all their movements to reach in safety.

Prince Bagration, having determined to cut his way through the corps of the enemy, made the necessary preparations for this desperate enterprise. He formed his army into two columns; and ordered the one to advance by the great road to Mohilof. It reached a small village, where the French were finely posted, and in great strength. A severe contest ensued. The Russians maintained a lively cannonade; and the enemy was at last compelled to retire with loss. Davoust at once saw the importance of these operations, and became alarmed by the successes of Prince Bagration, who threatened to make his way through the formidable masses of the enemy. The French general therefore ordered up his reinforcements, and immediately precipitated upon the Russians a prodigious body of cavalry, which forced them for a moment to fall back. A powerful battery of cannon still saved them from confusion, and carried destruction into the enemy's ranks; and Davoust, aware of the importance of seizing it, ordered a strong column of infantry to turn the Russian flanks, and carry their artillery at the point of the bayonet. The object of this movement was for a while defeated; the French were forced to give way, but they again returned to the charge in greater numbers, and with more resolution than before. The prince was now aware, from the appearance of the enemy's divisions, that he could not make good his advance, but by a great and unnecessary sacrifice; he accordingly ordered his columns to withdraw, and proceeded in another direction to cross the Dnieper.—This obstinate affair, which lasted for more than ten hours, cost the combatants on each side a loss of from 3000 to 4000 men killed and wounded. The Russians carried off about 500 prisoners, whom they had taken at the outset of the engagement.—Platoff, who had been co-operating with the second army, hastened to gain possession of the road from Mohiloff, that he might check the enemy in his attempt further to molest the Russians in their progress.—On the 6th of August, Bagration reached Nauda, where he took up a position, and thus accomplished the great object of all his efforts—the re-union of the Russian armies.

Such was the situation of the contending parties about the beginning of the month of August. Russians, concentrated in Smolensk and the neighbourhood, seemed to wait the approach of the enemy, whose head-quarters were still at Vitepsk, but whose divisions were now pressing forward in all directions.—Delay still promised advantages to the Russians: it was necessary, in some measure, to repair the strength of the second army, already exhausted by marches so harassing, and greatly re-

duced in numbers by the desertion of Poles and other untoward events; while every day promised to add fresh reinforcements to the ranks of an army yet inferior in numbers to its opponents. The whole force under General Barclay de Tolly did not, even including the second army, exceed 130,000 men, upon which the powerful divisions of Beauharnois, Murat, Ney, Davoust, Mortier, and Poniatowski, were fast advancing.—Had the French been able at this moment to force their enemies to a general and decisive action, the integrity of the Russian empire might have been exposed to very great peril; but the affairs of Russia were gradually improving, while every day that elapsed was as the loss of a battle to the fortunes of the invader.

As the Russian government must have been aware of the approaching rupture with France, and could not but form some estimate of the force which would be employed in supporting the pretensions of Buonaparte, the astonishment was general at the obstinacy with which it maintained the war with Turkey.—The interests, real or imaginary, of the Russian empire may, in ordinary times, and when the state of continental Europe can produce in her neither anxiety nor alarm, bend her military genius, as a matter of course, to conquest and aggrandizement at the expence of that feeble despotism; but it is strange that the paltry efforts of such a power could ever have withdrawn the attention of the emperor and his ministers from the more serious task of arresting the progress of Buonaparte, who threatened the independence of all nations.—The intrigues of Buonaparte at the Porte, when he perceived that he must soon contend with Russia, no doubt rendered a pacification betwixt these powers a matter of more than usual difficulty; but the most obvious prudence demanded of the Emperor Alexander, that he should do every thing to counteract this insidious policy; to disencumber himself of all his other enemies, and to direct his whole force towards the discomfiture of a far more dangerous foe.—It was not, however, till the end of July, when the French armies had been two months in Russia, and had made the most alarming progress in the interior, that the emperor received intelligence that peace had been concluded with Turkey, and that the fine army, which had distinguished itself so much in the protracted contest on the Danube, was now at liberty to unite in repelling the invaders of the empire; that peace with England also, which all orders of Russians had so anxiously desired, and which the circumstances of Europe imperiously demanded, was announced.—To the impolicy of an administration whom circumstances had for a time elevated to authority in England, and whom fear of the common enemy and distrust of their country, had drawn into measures which surprised all Europe, had Great Britain been indebted for her unhappy separation from the most faithful of her continental allies. The bonds which their strange policy had burst asunder, the mad ambition of Buonaparte was strong enough to reunite; and if their abandonment of Russia in the hour of danger precipitated her into the treaty of Tilsit, his violence in its turn restored her to her natural alliance with the British empire.

General Count Kutusoff, who became afterwards so famous in this campaign, had hitherto conducted the army of the Danube to victory, and had by his wise policy hastened that pacification with the Ottoman empire, which it was so much the interest of Russia to conclude. In reward of his services, this brave man had been created a prince of the Russian em-

pire; and as he was far advanced in years, he had retired to St Petersburgh in the hope of spending the remainder of his days in tranquillity. A more brilliant destiny, however, was yet reserved for him; and the closing scenes of his life were to be signally illustrated in the destruction of the enemies of his country.—The army of the Danube was in the mean time commanded by Admiral Tchichagoff, a man of singular and versatile powers, and of a genius for military affairs which was not confined to one element. The first task imposed on him in his new situation, was to conduct his army through a long and difficult march; to bring up his troops from the Danube and the Pruth, to encounter the Austrians under Prince Schwartzenberg, and the Saxons under General Renier, who had reached Minsk, Slonim, and Kobrine. Some brilliant affairs had already occurred in this direction, which it would be unjust to pass over without notice.—General Kaminskoy, with about 8000 men, had, at an early period of the retreat, been unfortunately separated from the second army; he approached Kobrine, and fell in with a small party of his countrymen under Count Lambert. The town was occupied at the time by a party of Saxons under General Kleingel; it seemed to be carelessly defended, and the Russians attempted to take it by surprise. A detachment of the Saxons occupying a bridge in the neighbourhood was first assailed and made prisoners; after which the Russians advanced on the town. An obstinate conflict ensued—the carnage was great on both sides; but the Saxons were at last compelled to surrender. The commander of the Saxon division, 70 officers, and 2500 men, were made prisoners; eight pieces of cannon and four standards were taken.—The advance of the army under the Russian General Tormozoff, which had for some time been employed in this quarter, in a few days entered Kobrine, where they found that their intention of dislodging the enemy had been anticipated.

General Tormozoff resolved to follow up these successes by an attack on Slonim, where Renier with the remainder of the Saxons was posted. This general, however, having heard of the disasters at Kobrine, ordered Prince Schwartzenberg to hasten his junction with him. Tormozoff proceeded to take up a fine position near the town; his right and centre being defended by a morass, and his left protected by a strong battery of cannon. He neglected, however, to occupy a small village and a wood, both of which covered the road to Kobrine, and must have given him great advantages; but he conceived the position which he had already taken to be nearly impregnable. The Austrians, French, and Saxons advanced under Renier and Schwartzenberg; Renier was not slow to remark the errors of the Russians, and to profit by them. On the 11th of August he filled the village with cavalry, and the wood with a strong body of infantry and artillery, and proceeded in concealment to advance upon the Russians. On the morning of the 12th, the attack was begun to the surprise of the Russian general, who lost not a moment, however, in repairing his fault; but by bringing round a heavy battery of cannon, and ordering up his reserves, prepared to withstand the assaults of the enemy. A very warm contest ensued, in which both parties fought with the greatest resolution. Schwartzenberg observing that the whole attention of the Russians was directed to their left, made an unsuccessful effort to pass the morass by which the right of their position was defended, and to distract on this side the measures of the enemy. The French ge-

neral, become desperate by the unexpected difficulties which he had encountered, brought immense reinforcements from his centre and left, extended his front, and endeavoured to outflank the Russians. The Russians instantly adopted the only plan by which they could counteract these movements; they also changed their front, and extended their line in a parallel direction to that of the enemy. The battle was once more renewed with great fury; but such was the execution done by the Russian artillery among the assailants, that the latter were broken, and at one time pursued even to the skirts of the wood. The attack was again renewed; six fresh battalions of infantry and several regiments of Austrian hulans and hussars were led on to support it. Night alone parted the combatants, each of whom left on the field about 5000 killed and wounded. The enemy retired to his former position, and the Russians during the night prepared to return to Kobrine, where they arrived the following day without molestation.

While these events occurred in the south, great exertions were made to strengthen Riga, against which a division of the invading army had been directed. The command of the army destined to defend this city, had been entrusted to General Essen, who proved himself worthy of the confidence of his sovereign.—The suburbs of Riga were destroyed, and every thing removed which could assist the approach of the enemy, or interrupt the fire from the fortifications. A strong garrison was posted in the town; and the army stationed in front was commanded by Essen in person. From this army General Lewis was detached with a considerable force to occupy Eckan and the neighbourhood. The Prussians, who formed a part of the corps of Macdonald, were more immediately employed against Riga, and had already posted themselves betwixt that city and Mittau; the head-quarters of Macdonald himself were still at Yacobstade.—The Prussian General Kliest, alarmed lest the advance of the Russians should interrupt his communications with Macdonald, determined on attacking them; and for this purpose he moved towards Eckan. A lively cannonade and charge of cavalry from the Russians for a time disconcerted this attack; but General Kleist rallied his troops, and pushed forward with great impetuosity. The contest was obstinate; but the Russians finding themselves pressed by superior numbers, retired towards Riga, and effected their retreat in the most perfect order. About six hundred on each side were killed and wounded in this affair.

A month now elapsed before operations were resumed in this quarter. Essen, however, received intelligence that the French forces were increasing very much in numbers; that a strong reserve was advancing from Germany, which would supersede the Prussians in the siege of Riga; and that a powerful battering train had been ordered up from Dantzic to enable the besiegers to commence operations with effect. He saw the danger of his situation, should he leave the Prussians unbroken, till this mass of force should arrive; and he, therefore, determined on driving them back to Mittau. The Prussians were advantageously posted, and had been careful to strengthen a position naturally good, by intrenchments.—The town of Eckan protected their right, their centre was secured by a branch of a small river, and a chain of posts connected them with Shlock, village not far distant. Essen resolved to attack their right; and to conceal this part of his plan he ordered a false attack to be made on their centre. The flotilla of British

and Russian gun-boats was directed to co-operate by dislodging the enemy from Shlock.—On the 23d of August, the attack was made by the Russians with great spirit, and the enemy's intrenchments were carried at the point of the bayonet. But the indiscretion of the Russians had nearly ruined this bold enterprise. They became eager and disorderly in the pursuit; they opened their ranks, and were repaid for this piece of folly by a most destructive charge of Prussian cavalry, which drove them back with great slaughter. The enemy was thus enabled to rally his scattered forces, which already had suffered so much. In these circumstances, the battle was renewed, but the perseverance of the Russians overcame all obstacles.—In one part of his plan Essen was disappointed; for although the commander of the flotilla had compelled the enemy to retire from Shlock, he had been prevented from bringing his boats farther up the river, and co-operating towards the entire destruction of the besiegers.—In this affair the Russians took 650 prisoners, and killed and wounded about 1500 of the enemy. Their own loss was from 600 to 700.

The peace which had been concluded with England was about this time announced, to the infinite joy of all classes of Russians. The terms in which the Emperor Alexander intimated this fortunate event to his subjects are remarkable, and strongly indicate the strength of that connexion which must ever subsist betwixt England and the great powers of the continent, and the folly of the attempt made by France to effect a permanent separation. "The peace with England," said the emperor, "so generally and so long desired, is as length established. We hasten to announce it, knowing that it has been as evidently the work of our faithful subjects as of England herself. Feeling acutely for the decay into which our commerce fell by the disunion of the two countries, we lose not a moment in seeking to revive it to new energies, by the proclamation of a reunion so rich in benefits to both parties. Nay, we even go before forms, in our tenderness for the public good, and the public anxiety; and without waiting for the official ratification of the treaty of peace, we thus open before our people all its advantages, unwilling that more of the summer should pass by without having yielded its fruit to the two nations, which commerce alone can bring. We order from this day that all our ports in the Baltic, and on the White Sea, and on the Black Sea, shall at all times be open to the English vessels; and that every commercial relationship may instantly recommence between our empire and that of Great Britain." A higher compliment could not have been paid to the benign influence which the pre-eminence of England exerts over the nations of Europe—an influence founded on justice and beneficence—on the mutual interchange of all those blessings which rescue rude nations from barbarism, and accelerate the advance of those already civilized—an influence which is required to sustain the liberties and secure the happiness of the human race.—Such was the nature of that influence which the French government was so eager to denounce, and against which it seduced, for a time, the nations of the continent to contend.—The benefits of an intercourse with England are thus proclaimed in the happiness which it diffuses around: the miseries of a connexion with France have been manifested in the desolation of Europe.

It is worthy of remark, that about this period the enemy began to experience the effects of that cruel and exterminating system of warfare which he himself had so long pursued in the

Tyrol, in Spain, and in many of the other countries which he had invaded, and where he met with a firm resistance on the part of the people. He had disregarded not only the dictates of humanity, but the accustomed rules of war, and had enforced submission by the terrors of indiscriminate ruin and proscription. He still affected to follow the same system in Russia, but he soon found that it was returned upon him with interest. The Russians felt enough of hatred to the French name; they were roused by an invasion which threatened the independence of their country; but they became exasperated to the utmost pitch by the insolence and cruelty of the invaders.—A striking example of this is said to have happened in the government of Twer. A detachment of French prisoners, accompanied by a small escort, arrived in a village near Smolensko, where they contrived to overpower the Russian soldiers who had them in charge. A party of peasants instantly made their appearance, and, armed with such weapons as they could most easily procure, attacked the French, and finally subdued them. Nor was this enough for their zeal; for it was with great difficulty that a few of the prisoners escaped their vengeance. The peasants in the neighbourhood, supposing that the French had actually made their way into this district of the empire, sounded the alarm, and no less than 9000 men, armed in the best way which the hurry of the moment would permit, made their appearance. They instantly declared their readiness to destroy their property, that it might not fall into the hands of the French, and to make any other sacrifice which the cause of their country might require. Instances of such devotion as this occurred frequently; and Buonaparte was inconsistent enough to complain of the savage mode of warfare pursued by the Russians, without reflecting that enormities, even greater than ever were committed by this people in revenge of his perfidy, had been executed by himself, in the wantonness of power, against innocent and unoffending nations.

Wittgenstein, who had continued to occupy the ground won by him from the enemy on the 10th and 11th of August, received reinforcements from Dinabourg, and determined to dislodge Oudinot from the position which he was fortifying at Polotsk.—On the 17th of August he advanced in two columns, and, after a few hours, reached the ground on which he meant to give the enemy battle. Oudinot hastened to give the Russians a check before they should have reached the position, which he foresaw it was their object to take up; but in this he was disappointed.—The effect of the Russian artillery was here, as on many other occasions, found irresistible; and its well-directed operation in the affairs of which we are now giving a brief account, had a powerful influence on the result of the conflict. A heavy fire from a Russian battery, directed against the enemy's masses, while they were yet unformed, created the utmost confusion; a dreadful carnage ensued, in which Marshal Oudinot was severely wounded, and the enemy was at last driven with great slaughter to his intrenched camp.—St Cyr, who succeeded Oudinot in the command, was anxious to distinguish himself by retrieving these disasters, and on the following day determined to renew the conflict. Count Wrede commanded the Bavarians on the right; General Maison was entrusted with the left flank; and St Cyr himself led on the centre. Wittgenstein, who had by this time gained possession of the enemy's intrenchments, determined to remain on the defensive, and allowed them to make

their dispositions for the attack without interruption. The attack was begun by a discharge of the Bavarian artillery, which was instantly followed by a general and destructive fire from the whole French line. The Russians made a bold attack on the enemy's left, which entirely succeeded in driving him in that quarter back upon his reserves. The contest in the centre, commanded on the one side by St Cyr, and on the other by Wittgenstein, was maintained with the most obstinate bravery. At last, however, the enemy was forced to give way at all points, and was pursued with such activity, that numbers of his fugitive soldiers fell even in the streets of Polotsk, into which they were driven by the Russians. The battle lasted upwards of twelve hours, and the pursuit did not cease till midnight.—The French left about 10,000 men killed and wounded on the field; they lost also many prisoners, including no less than 30 officers. The Russians stated their loss at 4000 men put *hors de combat*, among whom were several of their generals.—Such was the result of Buonaparte's attempt to open for his armies a passage to St Petersburgh, and thus to inflict a fatal blow on the independence of the Russian empire. But it is proper to return to operations of still greater moment, which were under the immediate direction of the French ruler.

CHAP. XIV.

Russian Affairs continued. Capture of Smolensko by the French. Battle of Borodino. The French occupy Moscow. Their unsuccessful Attempts to negociate. They evacuate Moscow.

BUONAPARTE remained at Vitepsk until he received intelligence that his reinforcements from Tilsit were advancing upon Wilna. He then resolved immediately to attack Smolensko; and with this view, on the 13th of August he ordered Murat and Beauharnois to advance and effect the passage of the Boristhenes. The Russian general-in-chief, aware of those movements, ordered Prince Bagration to fall back to Smolensko by the Moscow road, while on the 14th he himself retired to the high ground on the right bank of the Dnieper, by which Smolensko is commanded. He learned also, that the enemy under Murat and Ney had already advanced in great force, and driven the Russians from Krasnoy with severe loss.—The garrison of Smolensko was in the meantime strengthened, and the necessary preparations made, that the Russians might avail themselves of the advantages which the situation of this city presented, to check, for a while at least, the advance of the invader. The communication betwixt the garrison of Smolensko, now 30,000 strong, and the army under Barclay de Tolly, which occupied the heights, was fully established by three bridges; and the ancient walls of Smolensko, although ill adapted to resist the operations of modern warfare, were mounted with cannon, that nothing might be left undone by the Russians of which circumstances permitted them to avail themselves.

The French main army had been reinforced by the junction of Poniatowski, and presented at this moment a very compact and formidable body.—The capture of Smolensko was an object of great importance to the enemy, for he would thus be able to dislodge the Russians from the only favourable position for defence which was to be found on this side of Moscow, while the occupation of a city so ancient and venerable, would give that sort of eclat to his operations, of which he has always known well how to avail himself.—On the 16th of August Buonaparte was at the head of his army before Smolensko; and he no sooner saw the position and strength of his enemy than he decided on his plan of operations. He determined to carry the intrenched suburbs and the city, and at the same time to destroy the bridges by which a communication was maintained betwixt the garrison and the army on the heights. With this view, Marshal Ney was ordered to take up the ground on the left, Davoust to occupy the centre, and Poniatowski to place himself on the

right. The reserves consisting of cavalry and guards, formed the rear; the cavalry was commanded by Murat and Beauharnois, and Buonaparte himself remained with the guards. On the 17th of August the sanguinary contest was begun, which ended in the occupation of Smolensko by the French armies.

The fire from the Russian cannon was answered by the French with energy and effect. Poniatowski first succeeded in driving a body of Russians from a formidable position, on which a battery was instantly constructed, and directed against one of the bridges. This gave the enemy a great advantage, and, animated as he now was by success, he pushed forward in great numbers, and with unwonted fury; drove the Russians before him into their intrenchments, and even there vigorously attacked them with the bayonet. The Russians for two hours maintained this unequal and sanguinary contest with firmness, and resisted every effort of the enemy to pierce their lines. The enemy, however, still pressed on with additional numbers; the fight was every moment becoming more arduous, and already the operations of the Russians were impeded by the heaps of slain which surrounded them on all sides. In these desperate circumstances they retired, still fighting, into the city, and already the French were under its walls.—It was the object of Barclay de Tolly to prolong the defence till Prince Bagration should be enabled to march to Doregobouche, where it was proposed to reunite the armies; and the brave garrison of Smolensko was ready to second his views. The fire from the walls still kept the enemy in check; and he quickly ordered batteries to be constructed which compelled the Russians to abandon the city. Their resistance continued, however, till the movements of the main army could be accomplished; and, in the meantime, every thing in the city, and even the buildings, were hastily destroyed by the hands of their devoted owners.—General Korff having destroyed the communication with the right bank of the Dnieper, led off what still remained of his gallant army; and on the morning of the 18th of August the enemy entered Smolensko without further opposition.

When the French leader entered the city, he found it a heap of ruins. He was anxious to save something from the general destruction which met his view, and he ordered his soldiers to exert themselves in extinguishing the flames. They were too busily employed, however, in seizing what remained amid the wreck of this once celebrated city, and paid but little respect to the orders of their chief. The anxiety of Buonaparte to enter Smolensko in triumph, and to secure it as a place of repose for his troops, was manifested in the reflections which he made on this scene of ruin and horror. —"Smolensko," said he, "may be considered as one of the finest cities in Russia, and of the most commanding situation. Had it not been for the circumstances of war, which involved it in flames, and consumed its magazines filled with merchandize, this city would now be regarded as the richest resource of our army. But even in its present ruined state, it puts us in possession of a formidable military post, and its remaining buildings afford excellent hospitals for the sick." The reflections here made could deceive no one; chagrin and mortification were evident in every line. In contemplating the ruins of this once celebrated city, Buonaparte was heard to exclaim, "Never was a war prosecuted with such ferocity—never did defence put on so hostile a shape against the common feelings of self-preservation. These people treat their

own country as if they were its enemies."—He could not appreciate the efforts of real patriotism; he judged of the Russians on principles which could have applied to those only over whom he had usurped authority. They met him with flattery, because they dreaded his power; but the inhabitants of Russia knew no terms of compromise with his arrogance and ambition.

In the obstinate affair before Smolensko, the Russians lost about 4000 men killed and wounded; but the loss of the enemy was much greater. If the French accounts were entitled to credit, it might seem, indeed, that the enemy had achieved wonders, unparalleled even in romance; for we are told, that the dreadful contest which preceded the occupation of Smolensko cost him no more than 700 killed, and 3200 wounded. It is surprising, that the authors of reports so absurd should at any time have hoped to be believed; but when we consider that the French accounts are now very generally disregarded, while the reports of the Russians have been uniformly verified by the event, nothing more seems necessary than to oppose the candid history which the latter give of the campaign, to the idle and absurd fabrications of their enemies.

Some Spanish prisoners, who were taken in this very battle, stated the loss of the enemy in killed and wounded alone, as high as 13,000 or 14,000 men; and when the nature of the engagement, and the situation of the contending parties are kept in view, this account cannot be deemed incredible.—But whatever may have been the loss sustained in the action, the city, on the entrance of the French, disappointed their hopes of comfort and repose. Buonaparte and a few of his favourite generals occupied the episcopal palace; his infantry sought relief from their fatigues amid a heap of ruins, while the cavalry took possession of the churches,—as if they had meant by this act of sacrilege, to raise to the highest pitch the fury and indignation of the pious Russians.

Buonaparte hastened to repair the bridges which had been destroyed; and with that alacrity which so long characterized all his military operations, ordered the construction of a new bridge farther up the river, that he might at the same time harass the rear-guard of the retiring army, and endeavour, by a movement in another direction, to cut it off entirely from the main body.—His orders were so promptly obeyed, that Baron Korff, who commanded the Russian rear-guard, had not marched far from Smolensko, when he found his progress interrupted, the enemy having already pre-occupied his line of march, and in great force taken a position to intercept him. Korff had no resource left but to form on the spot, and try to maintain his ground, till the general-in-chief should send him reinforcements. He had not time, however, to make even these arrangements, till he was assailed with impetuosity by the corps of Marshal Ney. The Russian general was thus surrounded in an instant, and placed in the most critical circumstances.—The furious cannonade, which instantly commenced, was heard by the main army of the Russians; and Prince Eugene of Wirtemburg was dispatched with a strong body of troops, to support their companions under Korff, who had been thus exposed to so unequal a conflict. The prince made good his passage in spite of all opposition; and as the ground which General Korff occupied was favourable, and he found himself so strongly supported, he determined to meet with firmness all the efforts of the enemy, who commenced a furious attack on the Russian centre, which he hoped to break. A heavy discharge of

artillery, however, baffled all his efforts, and he was forced to withdraw.—He now changed his plans, and as he found that a small party of Russians had occupied a village near the high road to Moscow, he expected by falling on this position to distract the attention of Korff, and to force him to abandon the ground which he had so well defended. It fortunately happened, that General Touchkoff, who had been ordered from the main army to the support of this position, arrived at this critical moment. A furious battle ensued; the whole force of the enemy was now directed to this point, and fought with a resolution which did them honour. The battle lasted till midnight, when the enemy was compelled to withdraw,—to leave the Russians in full possession of the field, and at liberty to direct their future movements according to their own choice. The affair of this day cost the Russians a loss of 4000 men killed and wounded; the loss of the enemy must, from the nature of the contest, have been still greater.—The French, besides, lost in the course of the day about 1300 prisoners.

The rear guard of the Russians proceeded on their march to join the main army; and on the 23d they accomplished their object.—The enemy again made his appearance in force, and shewed a design of turning the left of the Russians, that he might intercept their retreat, and compel them to engage in a general battle; but as the ground was unfavourable, the Russian general-in-chief continued his retreat.—At Wiasma every thing that could be useful to the enemy was destroyed, and a position nearer Moscow taken up by the Russian army, where it was determined for some time to make a stand.—While matters were in this state, Barclay de Tolly was informed by a courier, that Prince Kutusoff had been appointed in his stead to the command of the Russian armies.

The appointment of this veteran hero to so honourable a station at this critical moment, gave universal satisfaction. His talents were known and admired by his countrymen; his long experience and various services appeared to entitle him above all others to the distinction which he now attained. His great age alone, might have seemed an obstacle to his elevation, at a season when so many vigorous efforts would be required; but it was afterwards found, as his sovereign had anticipated, that length of years had not impaired his capacity, nor relaxed his spirit of enterprise.—In his way to head-quarters, where he arrived on the 29th August, he passed through Moscow, and had an interview with Count Rostopchin the governor, whose memory will be cherished with fondness so long as the campaign in Russia is remembered.—Whether they at this period foresaw the events which were so soon to follow, and aware that Moscow must be entered by the enemy, formed the singular determination of sacrificing this ancient and venerable capital to the independence of their country, has not been hitherto ascertained. Certain it is, that both these great men were animated by the warmest patriotism, and had their whole minds absorbed in the result of the momentous conflict which was approaching.

When the prince arrived at head-quarters, he perceived that the position which the army then occupied, was altogether unfavourable for a general battle, and he instantly determined on seeking another, where the troops might repose for a while in security, and prepare for new fatigues and dangers.—On the 30th of August he put the army in motion, and halted it on the following day in the neigh-

bourhood of the village of Borodino, situated near the great road leading to Moscow.—He could find no position betwixt this and Moscow more favourable for the great battle which he had resolved to hazard.—At a small distance from the village there is a deep ravine, through which a rivulet runs, and of which the prince availed himself for the protection of his right and centre under Barclay de Tolly and Benningsen. The left under Bagration, stretched to the village of Semenofka, and as it had no natural defences, it might easily have been turned by the road leading from Smolensko to Mojaisk. But every thing was done which the hurry of the moment would permit, to strengthen it with redoubts and batteries, which might impede the rapid approach of the enemy.—The general-in-chief communicated the plans which he had formed to his officers; he encouraged his soldiers by his presence and exhortations, and made every arrangement which circumstances would permit, to ensure success in this great encounter.

It was remarked, that so soon as Buonaparte was apprised of the appointment of Prince Kutusoff as general-in-chief, he became more cautious in his operations, and paid this silent and involuntary tribute to the genius of his antagonist.—On the 30th of August, the French leader had reached Wiasma, which, like Smolensko, he found a scene of desolation. Yet he did not advance from its vicinity till the 4th September. On the 5th of the same month, the reconnoitring parties of the enemy were rapidly succeeded by strong masses of infantry and cavalry, which, by advancing on the Russian left, unequivocally indicated the intention of Buonaparte, to direct his efforts against that part of the army under Kutusoff, which the prince expected would be first assailed.

The rear-guard of the Russian army under Lieutenant-General Konovitzen, was still a little in front of the Russian left, where it was attacked with great impetuosity. After a short resistance, it fell back on Prince Bagration's line, under cover of a redoubt which was powerfully defended, and was as vigorously assailed. It was the object of the enemy to carry the redoubt, and to dislodge the Russians from a neighbouring wood in which they had been posted; but a furious discharge from the Russian artillery compelled him for a while to withdraw.—The corps under Poniatowski was more fortunate; and the assailants, who had already been repulsed, were inspired with fresh courage. A most obstinate affair ensued; the post was abandoned and retaken by the Russians no less than four times, but they were at last compelled to fall back, and leave it in possession of the enemy.—The general in-chief after this affair ordered the left-wing to withdraw towards the adjoining heights, that, should it be again attacked, it might be better protected by the strong batteries with which they were covered. They were left to do this without interruption from the enemy; for the whole of the 6th of September, (the day which preceded the battle of Borodino, the most sanguinary which has been fought in modern times,) passed without military operations of any kind, and was employed in active preparation for the conflict which was expected to decide the fate of Russia.

The skill and activity of Buonaparte were conspicuous on this occasion. He covered the height which his troops had carried the preceding day with a hundred pieces of artillery; he constructed three other batteries, two of which were directed against the centre, and one against the left of the Russians; detachments of artillery were also distributed along the

French line, so that he had not less than a thousand pieces of cannon ready to open their fire.—It was obvious, that he still meant to direct his chief efforts against the Russian left; and he did every thing to ensure success in this quarter, by ordering up the greater part of his troops and his ablest generals.

Nor were the dispositions of the Russian general less profound. He quickly penetrated the intentions of the enemy, and strengthened his left with the best part of his troops, which he formed into two lines, supported by artillery and cavalry. He posted a strong body of the militia of Moscow in a wood on the left, that they might act on the enemy's right and rear, should he attempt to turn the Russian flank. Strong batteries were also constructed for the protection of the centre and other parts of the army; and nothing seemed wanting to ensure the success of the Russians, but an equality in point of numbers with their enemies, who, in this respect, still boasted a superiority.

The prince knew well how to avail himself of the different principles of action which guide the Russian soldier; and he did not omit on this great occasion, to touch his feelings of religious enthusiasm. The holy pictures which had been saved amidst the ruins of Smolensko, were carried along the line by the priests attached to the army, and inspired the soldiers to a degree, which, in the religious apathy of more civilized nations, will not easily be conceived. While their minds were in this state of excitement, he made a speech, which, pronounced, as it was, on the eve of one of the greatest battles fought in modern times, the historian would be unpardonable in omitting; "Russians and fellow soldiers," he said, "behold before you in these sacred representatives of the holy objects of our worship, an appeal which calls upon heaven, to unite with men against the despotic troubler of the world. Not content with defacing the image of God, in the persons of millions of his creatures, this universal tyrant, this arch-rebel against all laws human and divine,—breaks into the sanctuary, pollutes it with blood, overthrows its altars, tramples on its rites, and exposes the very ark of the Lord, consecrated in these holy insignia of our church, to all the profanations of accident, of the elements, and of unsanctified hands. Fear not, then, but that the Lord, whose altars have been so insulted by the very worm his Almighty power had raised from the dust; fear not that he will not be with you; that he will not stretch forth his shield over your ranks, and, with the sword of vengeance fight against his enemies! This is the faith in which I will fight and conquer; this is the faith in which I would fight and fall, and still behold the final victory with my dying eyes. Soldiers! do your part. Think on the pollution of your altars; think of your wives and children looking to you for protection; think of your emperor, regarding you as the sinews of his strength; and before to-morrow's sun sets, write your faith and your fealty on the field of your country with the life's blood of the invader and his legions."

The address of Buonaparte to his army was not less characteristic. "Soldiers, before you is the field you have so ardently desired. The victory depends upon you; it is necessary to you. It will give you abundance; good winter-quarters; and a quick return to your country. Conduct yourselves as when at Austerlitz, at Friedland, at Vitepsk, at Smolensk, and the latest posterity will cite with pride your conduct on this day. They will say, *he was in that great battle under the walls of Moscow.*"—Little did he

anticipate that the battle of Borodino would be referred to in history, as a glorious and eternal contrast to the treachery which disgraced the combatants at Austerlitz, and the pusillanimity which at Jena laid the Prussian monarchy prostrate before his ambition.

At four in the morning of the 7th of September, the corps of Davoust and Poniatowski advanced by the wood which supported the Russian left; at six the action commenced, and the enemy experienced the advantages derived from the possession of the redoubt which he had taken the preceding day. Ney bore down with great force on the Russian centre, and Beauharnois assailed the right. The battle became general; but the left of the Russians under Prince Bagration had still to combat with nearly one half of the French force. The resolution of the enemy's cavalry on this flank was conspicuous; they charged the Russians even to their batteries, and whole squadrons of them were instantly destroyed. For three hours did this furious attack continue without effect; and Buonaparte perceived the necessity of ordering up reinforcements, both of cavalry and artillery.—The Russians were compelled to fall back, and the enemy immediately turned against the retiring columns the guns which they had abandoned. The Russian general seeing the left of the army thus overpowered, reinforced it from the reserve with grenadiers and cavalry; they returned to the combat with fresh vigour, and in the very moment when they were making a desperate effort to regain their lost position, the militia, and other troops which had been posted in the wood, rushed forth and took a dreadful vengeance on the enemy. The shock of this concentrated force was irresistible, and the French were forced to retire with precipitation.—Such were the events which occurred on the Russian left. On the other extremity of their line a combat scarcely less obstinate was maintained, Beauharnois made repeated efforts to carry the village of Borodino, and the redoubts which protected it; but his failure in all of them was complete, and he was ultimately repulsed with great loss. The Russian commander was thus enabled to reinforce his centre, where the battle still raged with great fury.—Night at last approached, and added only to the sublime horrors of the scene. But victory had now declared for the Russians, and the enemy, aware that he could no longer make a stand after the dreadful havoc which had been made among his legions, availed himself of the opportunity to withdraw at all points, and leave the field to the conquerors.—The field of battle, on the return of day, presented a frightful scene—for the carnage on both sides, from the magnitude of the preparations which had been made, and the resolution displayed by the combatants, was immense—The Russians estimate their own loss in killed and wounded at 40,000 men, and that of the enemy so high as 60,000. The French, who, as usual; claimed the victory, told a very different tale; but we may judge of the credit due to their story, when it is recollected, that although *victorious*, they found it necessary to retreat, and were on the following day exposed in their movements to the galling attacks of Platoff and his Cossaks, who were sent in pursuit.—The Russians lost some officers of distinction, among whom were Generals Toutchkoff and Konovitzen; the brave Prince Bagration afterwards died of his wounds.—Of the French generals, Caulaincourt and Montbrun were killed, and twelve others dangerously wounded. The Russians made 5000 prisoners, and took 30 pieces of cannon.—These details will not be deemed im-

pertinent, when the magnitude of this day's operations, and the consequences to which they led, are taken into consideration. A battle in which about 80,000 human beings were destroyed, is not an ordinary occurrence, even in this age of military exploits; and deserves, therefore, to be recorded with a minuteness, which, in other circumstances, would be trifling and inexcusable.

It has been demanded, with some appearance of reason, why Prince Kutusoff did not follow up this victory which had cost him so dear, and why he afterwards left the ancient capital of Russia exposed to the intrusion of the vanquished? To this question various answers have been given, some of them dictated by prejudice, and others which seem founded on a knowledge of the military events which preceded the battle of Borodino, as well as of the plans of the Russian chief which were soon developed.—The Russian armies have not been often beaten in the field, but few occasions have occurred in which they were able to profit by the victories they have achieved. They are but ill qualified for rapid movement, or for repairing with alacrity the disorganization which even a victory such as that of Borodino must have produced. They had already suffered extreme fatigue, and numerous privations, that department of the army on which the comfort of a soldier depends being most lamentably defective in the Russian service.—The French indeed were fatigued, and had suffered privations; but they had other motives than their enemies to pursue their march without relaxation. *They* sought safety and repose, the Russians had both; and it is not wonderful that in this condition their leader should have thought of giving them some relaxation. It would not have been humane—it might not have been prudent in him, to have hurried them to new trials of their patience and fortitude. The intelligence which Kutusoff received, that the enemy had still in his rear strong reserves of troops who had not been engaged on the preceding day, would, of itself, if all other arguments had been unavailing, have confirmed him in the resolution of waiting till his army should have recovered by repose, and gained strength by the reinforcements which were every day advancing, and which promised him an early opportunity of meeting the invader with the full assurance of success.

But this is not the only circumstance in the conduct of the Russian chief which excited surprise. His not following up the victory of Borodino admitted of some explanation; but a feeling of astonishment was universal among those to whom his plans were unknown, when they learned his determination to abandon Moscow to its fate—Moscow, the ancient and venerable capital of the Russians—the grand repository of their wealth, and the centre of their patriotic affections. For such a city it might have been expected that even a beaten army would have continued to struggle; but that the conquerors should willingly give it up to destruction, seemed wholly inexplicable. Yet no sooner did the prince learn that the French had been strongly reinforced, and were advancing, than he marched his army through Moscow, and took up a position on the Kalouga road.—The French were thus enabled to march directly on the capital, and at noon, on the 14th of September, they appeared before it.

To explain the singular determination which Prince Kutusoff had taken, he addressed to the emperor on the 16th of September, a letter which discovers the extent of his military genius.—He began by stating, that the late victory, glorious as it had been to the Russian arms, had cost him many lives; and that his army,

encumbered with sick and wounded, was but ill prepared to meet the fresh troops which it was known that the enemy could bring forward. In these circumstances, it would have been unwise to risk another battle, and he therefore determined on retiring. No position of any strength presented itself betwixt Borodino and Moscow; the fresh troops of the enemy already threatened the Russian lines; his whole force was now double that of the Russians, and a general engagement could therefore have promised little hope of success. A defeat before the walls of Moscow, while no measures had been taken to abandon the city, would have exposed it to be entered in triumph by the invader, to whom its wealth and resources of all kinds would have become available. The resolution was therefore taken to abandon the capital, after removing its treasures, and to present to the enemy, on his entrance, no prospect but that of famine and desolation.—The sacrifice of Moscow was a dreadful alternative to every Russsian, said the Prince, but it was a sacrifice of part for the preservation of the whole—of a great city, to the independence of a mighty empire. Had Moscow been defended to the last extremity, the rich provinces of Toula and Kalouga, from which the resources of the army were drawn, must have been abandoned; the army would have been ruined, and the empire might have' been lost. By relinquishing Moscow, the Russian army became masters of the Toula and Kalouga roads, covered these fertile provinces, maintained its communications uninterrupted with the corps of Tormozoff and Tchichagoff, interrupted the enemy's line of operations from Smolensko to Moscow, cut off the supplies which he expected from his rear, and actually blockaded him in the capital.—The occupation of Twer by General Winzengerode completed the line which was drawn around the enemy; and the Russian general-in-chief promised that Moscow would very soon be evacuated by its new possessors.

This reasoning was unanswerable, and appeared so even at the time to the Russian emperor, who was filled with admiration of the genius displayed by the general-in-chief.—Had the arguments of Prince Kutusoff been less cogent in themselves, it is probable, at all events, that the ruin which so quickly overtook the French, would, long ere this time, have silenced all controversy on the subject. Yet there is one remark which prejudice may still render necessary. The final destruction of the French army was not, as some persons affect to believe, the consequence of accident alone, of the inclemency of the season, and the burning of Moscow, but the result of a concerted plan of operations on the part of the Russian generals, on which they relied with confidence from the moment that the enemy threatened to advance into the interior of the country.—The views which Kutusoff thus unfolded to his master on the 16th of September, 1812, and which were so signally confirmed in the events of the succeeding winter, were formed even before the enemy had entered the capital. No better proof than this can be required, that the ruin of the invaders was not the effect of accident, but of design—not imputable to the climate alone, but to the martial genius of the Russian commander, who so promptly availed himself of the various expedients which were calculated to ensure the ultimate triumph of his country.

The plans of the prince were understood and appreciated by his court. Yet, as the occupation of Moscow would naturally fill the vulgar mind with despondency and alarm, the emperor determined to give the unequivocal sanction of the government to

the operations of the armies, and once more addressed his people. "Moscow," said he, "was entered by the enemy on the 15th September; at this intelligence it might be expected that consternation would appear on every countenance; but far from us be such pusillanimity. Rather let us swear to redouble our perseverance and our resolution; let us hope, that fighting in a just cause, we shall hurl back upon the enemy all the evil with which he seeks to overwhelm us. Moscow, indeed, is occupied by French troops; it has not become theirs in consequence of their having destroyed our armies: The commander-in-chief, in concert with the most distinguished of our generals, has deemed it prudent to bend for a moment to necessity. He retires only to give additional force to the weight with which he will fall on our enemy. Then will the short triumph of the French ruler lead to his inevitable destruction. He finds in Moscow not only no means for domination, but no means of existence. Our forces already surrounding Moscow, to which every day is bringing an accession of strength, will occupy all the roads, and destroy every detachment the enemy may send forth in search of provisions. Thus will he be fatally convinced of his error, in calculating that the possession of Moscow would be the conquest of the empire; and necessity will at last compel him to fly from famine through the ranks of our intrepid army. Without doubt, the bold, or rather it should be called the rash enterprise, of penetrating into the bosom of Russia, nay, of occupying its ancient capital, feeds the pride of the supposed conqueror, but it is the fatal point to which his destinies have dragged him on. He has not yet penetrated into a country where one of his actions has diffused terror, or brought a single Russian to submit. Is there an individual in the empire so abject as to despond when a feeling of vengeance animates his brethren? When the enemy, deprived of all his resources, and exhausting his strength from day to day, sees himself in the midst of a powerful nation, encircled by her armies, one of which menaces him in front, while the other three watch to interrupt the arrival of succours, and to prevent his escape, can Russians be alarmed?"—The whole of this address shewed that the emperor and the government were well aware of the nature of the contest which they had to sustain—that they understood and concurred in the plans of the general, and waited with firmness the entire overthrow of the enemy as the result of his admirable combinations.

Meanwhile, Count Rostopschin, the military governor of Moscow, had wisely prepared for the event, which he, as well as the other Russian chiefs, had expected. He had done every thing to equip and organise for the army the inhabitants, whose age and sex qualified them for taking the field. He had been careful to remove the women and children, the sick and aged; and he had withdrawn every thing which could be serviceable to the enemy.—The scene which Moscow now presented was shocking to humanity; every attempt to describe it must prove abortive. Two hundred thousand human beings of both sexes and of all ages were driven from their homes, ignorant where they might seek protection, and exposed to the inclemency of a Russian winter, which was fast approaching. But there were no sacrifices which this devoted people would not have made, rather than remain exposed to the ferocity of their enemies. They had heard of the excesses in which he was accustomed to indulge; they were not ignorant of the murders, rapine, and sacrilege which he had so often committed; and the biting frosts, the endless fa-

tigues, the famine and misery of all kinds to which they knew that they must now expose themselves, filled not their minds with half the horror which was inspired by the presence of the invader. The greater part of them abandoned their homes with precipitation; a few only of those whose minds were influenced by a stronger impulse —who had vowed revenge on the invader, and determined to perish in a desperate attempt for its gratification, remained.—The governor, having made every preparation which circumstances permitted, gave the signal for evacuating the city, and at the head of 40,000 of its brave inhabitants, proceeded to join the grand Russian army.

The enemy appeared before Moscow: his advanced guard, under Murat and Beauharnois, first entered the city, and proceeded towards the Kremlin, the ancient palace of the czars, which was ineffectually defended by a small band of those who still lingered in the capital. The gates were rapidly forced; but scarcely had the French accomplished this inglorious achievement, when a scene presented itself which threatened to baffle all their hopes. The city was discovered to be on fire in different quarters; and in whatever way the flames may have been first kindled, so brutal was the violence of the French soldiers—such their desire of seizing on the plunder of that great city, which their leader had so long promised them as the reward of their toils, and so zealous their exertions to increase the confusion which might favour their base designs, that, far from endeavouring to extinguish the conflagration, they were most active to increase it.—They were little aware of the long train of miseries which they were thus preparing for themselves.

It did not suit the dignity of Buonaparte, it would seem, to make his entrance into Moscow till he should be attended by the constituted authorities, and hailed as a conqueror.—He waited at the barrier leading to the Smolensko road, expecting that a deputation of the citizens would quickly arrive; but after a delay of many hours, no such deputation was descried. He sent a Polish general to remind the citizens of their duty; but the general brought him information that there were no longer any constituted authorities in Moscow; that he had found it a desart, and expected soon to see it a heap of ruins.—The French ruler still cherished a hope that the solemn farce, which he so much desired, might in one way or other be accomplished; and in the meantime he fixed his residence in the Petrofsky palace, about a mile from the city.—The next day, however, he was compelled to give way to necessity, and he entered the city without parade or ostentation, deeply incensed by his disappointment, and meditating schemes of revenge.

He took possession of the Kremlin; and, yielding to the gloomy passions with which his soul was filled, he determined on an exemplary punishment of Russian patriotism.—While his dark consultations proceeded, the flames spread even to the very walls of the palace. The rage of the disappointed tyrant no longer knew any bounds; and he instantly ordered his satellites to seize all Russians who might be found near the spot, or could be suspected of participating in the destruction of the city. One hundred of these unhappy persons were soon brought before him; they were questioned as to their proceedings, and a pardon was offered them on condition of their divulging the pretended conspiracy; but they remained silent, and despised the threats and promises of their ene-

my.—The mock trial was soon ended; the Russian patriots were ordered to immediate execution, and died with the assurance and constancy of true virtue.—There are some persons who have pretended to apologise for this act of judicial murder, and who have even ventured to maintain, before insulted humanity, that these proceedings were conformable to the law of nations.—Their arguments are puerile, as their feelings have always been base; and the mere statement of the fact, that a hundred loyal Russians, who were faithful to their allegiance, and sacrificed their lives to the chance of annoying their invaders, were punished as criminals, must be enough to raise against the perpetrators of such enormities the universal hatred of mankind. Buonaparte was in possession of Moscow, no doubt; but every Russian, whether soldier or citizen, owed it to his emperor and his country, that he should do every thing in his power to dislodge the enemy. It is only since the French revolution has made the world familiar with crimes, and habituated the mind to the most daring violations of international law, that invaders have pretended to chastise the faithful inhabitants of an insulted country for rising in its defence. The sacred law of self-preservation calls on every man, when his country is invaded, to arm in its support; and from the moment he does so he is a soldier. It was the duty of the Russian army to have dislodged the invader from Moscow, by all the means which it could employ; and the same was the duty of every loyal and patriotic citizen. When Buonaparte therefore dared to punish with death the brave men who tried to expel him and his soldiers from the ancient capital of their country, by the only means which fortune had now left them, he committed a more flagrant outrage on public law and on humanity than ever before occurred in the history even of his own life, already stained with every species of atrocity.

The cruelties of a tyrant begin and end in cowardice. It was fear that induced Buonaparte to make that terrible example; and after he made it, his fears seemed still to increase. He was afraid that the attempt to burn the Kremlin would be repeated; and he consented to become a prisoner in this palace, and ordered that every entrance to it should be shut, except one which was open only to his favourites and confidential officers. His efforts, however, to preserve Moscow were unavailing, although his pride and his necessities equally called upon him to save it from destruction. He had promised the wealth of this capital as the reward of his soldiers; its spacious palaces as their retreat for the winter; and he had anxiously expected that from this great city he should give the law to the Russian empire, and consummate his authority on the continent. But the flames were spreading rapidly in all directions, and the entire destruction of Moscow already seemed inevitable.—The description even of an eye-witness must convey but an imperfect idea of this scene of horror; yet as it can afford the only approximation to truth, the following sketch shall be inserted.—"From the night of yesterday, September 14th," says the narrator, "until that of the 19th, the fire blazed in all quarters. It first broke out near the Foundling Hospital, and almost immediately afterwards on the side of the city close to the Stone Bridge, and in the neighbourhood of the palace which the King of Naples selected for his residence. A third and more extensive fire broke out and spread itself along the centre of the town. The inhabitants beheld their burning houses with a resignation which evidently proceeded from the belief that they should not

long survive their destruction. The conviction that their losses would be deprivations to the enemy also; that in the flames perished his most important resources, was their sincere consolation. New fires broke forth wherever the French soldiers directed their ruthless steps. Women cast themselves into the flames to escape insult; and no sacrifice to patriotism was left unperformed. On the morning of the third day after the entrance of the enemy a violent wind arose, and then indeed the conflagration became general. In less than an hour the whole extent of the capital for many versts seemed a sheet of flame. The immense tract of land above the river, which was formerly covered with houses, was one sea of fire; and the sky was hidden from our eyes by the tremendous volumes of smoke which rolled over the city. Dreadful as was the calamity, though it even menaced the lives of our destroyers, yet they felt no pity; not a touch of remorse came near their obdurate hearts. Still they proceeded in search of plunder; still they heaped crime upon crime, and aggravated, by every act of cruelty, the tremendous horrors of the scene. Surely the Almighty Judge, in his utmost wrath, never before presented so awful a spectacle to mankind. Where was there an asylum, at this awful moment, for suffering humanity?—where for feeble age, shrinking from the impending ruin?—where for the bleeding limbs of the young patriot?—where for the frantic maid, flying from the grasp of the lawless ruffian? There was no refuge on earth, and guilt, for a time, had its triumph. Napoleon, from the windows of the Kremlin, must have contemplated the progress of this deluge of destruction. While he shuddered, for his own sake, at the stormy ocean of fire swelling on all sides, and urging its waves towards him, he must assuredly have been visited by some feelings of horror, and have dreaded that the hour should come, when he must account for the scene before him to the Being, by whom himself and all the creatures now perishing in his sight were alike created. If ever his conscience has spoken—if ever it has made itself heard, it was in one of these dreadful nights. The flames of Moscow must have been to him the torch of the furies!"—This scene of horrors had indeed some effect on the mind of Buonaparte; but the impulse which directed him was of a nature entirely selfish. He foresaw that he would have need of Moscow entire, to shelter his followers during the winter; and he therefore exerted himself, although without effect, to arrest the progress of the flames, and to restore order in the city by the semblance of civil authority. By threats and promises, he at last prevailed on a few wretches, at the head of whom was M. Lesseps, the *ci-devant* French consul at St Petersburgh, to assume the functions of civil magistracy; but their authority was disregarded, and their persons insulted even in the streets of Moscow.—The French ruler had already committed himself too far with his soldiers to venture on the prompt chastisement of the enormities which they were now perpetrating; he had promised them the plunder of Moscow, and they determined that he should keep his word.—When he came within sight of the capital, he said to his soldiers, "Behold the end of your campaign; its gold and its plenty are yours;" and after all the disappointments which they had already experienced in this luckless campaign, it might have been dangerous for their chief had he dared to restrain them.—Examples were at last made of one or two of the most atrocious delinquents; but even these were without effect on the army: the invaders still advanced

in their career of guilt; their discipline and activity relaxed apace, until their excesses became so great as to contribute in no small degree to the awful catastrophe which was approaching.

The Russian army, after various manœuvres which deceived the enemy, took up the position which had been selected by the counsels of their chief. Their right stretched across the Toula road, their centre occupied the old, and their left the new Kalouga road; and by this disposition the most fertile provinces of the empire were placed beyond the enemy's grasp. General Dochtoroff was sent towards Monjaisk to act in the rear of the French; and Cossacks were employed in all directions to interrupt their supplies. Thus was the French army in a great measure surrounded without any hope but in retreat, and that a retreat which threatened the most serious difficulties. The whole Russian empire was in a state of activity; and reinforcements of regular and irregular troops were arriving every day to secure the annihilation of the invaders. It is a remarkable circumstance, that the enemy remained for some time in perfect ignorance as to the numbers and position of the Russian armies, and seem to have enjoyed the fallacious security of a moment. He may have thought that the Russians had for ever abandoned the cause of the empire; and that, overwhelmed with despondency by the fall of Moscow, they had lost all their spirit, and had begun to despair. From this vain dream, however, he was roused by the appearance of Russian forces in his rear; for Winzengerode, who had been stationed at Twer, had already sent forward parties of his troops to Monjaisk, and got into communication with detachments from the grand army. These movements were no less honourable to the Russian chiefs than discreditable to their enemies, to whom they remained so long unknown. The French, however, when they heard of the advance of the Russians, dispatched from Moscow strong divisions to occupy all the adjoining roads by which a surprise might have been attempted.

But the French ruler was now awakened from his vision of conquest, and all the horrors of his situation at once opened to his view. His soldiers became turbulent and clamorous; they demanded from their leader that peace which he had promised to dictate in the Russian capital. The blood through which they had waded to Moscow, had never for a moment inspired them with one sentiment of pity or remorse; but the awful retribution which they now saw inevitable, and of which they were to become the victims, speedily changed their resolution. Buonaparte saw at once the perils of his situation; he perceived that peace could now afford the only hope to him and his followers; but he was yet unwilling to stoop from the attitude of conquest, and to implore the forbearance of those whom he had so deeply injured. His dignity seemed still to require that he should be addressed as a conqueror; and he was perhaps afraid, that, if he had talked of peace, the weakness of his situation, and the extent of his fears, must have been exposed to his enemy. He waited, therefore, in anxious expectation, that proposals of some kind might come from Russia; he trusted to his erroneous impressions of the character of the Russian government and people; but all his expectations were disappointed. The fatal delay which he required as a sacrifice to his pride, was increasing his difficulties every moment; his stores were exhausted, his supplies intercepted, and already his

troops had become the victims of famine and disease. They were impatient from suffering, and despised all the rules of discipline; the efforts of their leaders to restrain their discontent were unavailing. Famine forced them to the most dreadful extremities; they sallied forth into the adjoining country in quest of sustenance, and fell a sacrifice to the peasantry, who watched their movements with vindictive ferocity. It was obvious, therefore, that to keep them longer in the position which they occupied, would be to expose them to lingering but inevitable destruction. The pride of Buonaparte was humbled; he was at last compelled to give way to circumstances, and to sue for peace to those, over whom, but a few short weeks before, he had pretended to exercise the rights of conquest.

The effort which the French ruler was compelled to make was humiliating in the extreme; and he endeavoured to disguise its real character by affecting, as usual, a sincere desire for the repose of nations. It is a singular circumstance, that this disturber of the peace of Europe, whose life began amid scenes of bloodshed and misery, has on all occasions been the first to profess an ardent desire of peace, and to affect the greatest sympathy with the sufferings of humanity. It is easy to account for this in the vulgar way, by saying that such professions were the result of mere artifice on the part of this personage, ... iction of the great share ... has had in all the commotions ... fifteen years, and of the ... him which such a course must have ... ught upon his name, may have led him to hope to counteract it by professions of more than ordinary warmth for the happiness of his fellow creatures. There is another view of his character, however, which may perhaps afford a better explanation of this singularity. Buonaparte has never desired peace, except when he had either obtained the ultimate objects of war, or had at all events made as great progress towards them as circumstances at the time would permit; and as soon as this point was gained, surely no man had so much reason to wish for peace, as the person to whom a general pacification promised to secure the grand points of his ambition.—Some persons have very much admired the magnanimity of the man, who, in the moment of victory, so frequently offered terms of peace to his enemy; but they should recollect, that as soon as victory had conducted him to his immediate end, it became his manifest interest to secure, by treaty, what he held but on a precarious footing—what he owed to the chance of war, and could never, from the nature of his authority, claim in virtue of any title hitherto recognized in modern Europe. Buonaparte was a mere soldier; he recollected that the acquisitions of a soldier and an usurper are held by a precarious tenure, and he wished, on all occasions, to superadd to the right of conquest the solid title which is conferred by the principles of political and international law. With a wise deference to the prejudices of human nature, he preferred the acquisition of a territory by treaty to the occupation of it by force, and prudently endeavoured to sink the soldier in the politician.

General Lauriston, a favourite diplomatist of Buonaparte, was sent with a flag of truce to the Russian head-quarters. After an idle preface about the anxiety of his master to prevent the farther effusion of blood, he announced the readiness of Buonaparte still to treat with the Russian court. The answer of Prince Kutusoff was resolute; he said, that, as to the effusion of blood, there was no Russian who would not sacrifice his life in this

contest, and that no terms could be entered into while an enemy remained within the Russian territory.—Buonaparte was incensed by this refusal; but as the discontent of his army became more alarming than ever, he affected to believe that Kutusoff had exceeded his powers in this peremptory rejection of the French proposals, and that as soon as they should reach the Emperor Alexander, negociations would be opened. The most extravagant reports were in the mean time circulated throughout the French army; Riga, it was pretended, had been taken by assault; Macdonald had entered Petersburgh in triumph; a large convoy was on its way to the relief of the grand army; and the sufferings of the Russians were yet more severe than those of their enemies. While these efforts were made to deceive the soldiers, famine and disease spread their ravages throughout the camp; and the Russian armies were already beginning to inflict that signal chastisement, the account of which will afterwards form so prominent a feature in the history of this memorable campaign.

The Russian Generals Dochtoroff, Korff, Milaradovitch, and Winzengerode, who, with their detached corps, occupied all the roads which surrounded Moscow, cut off the supplies, dispersed the straggling parties of the enemy, and took many prisoners.—The sufferings and discontent of the French increased; and yet there was no intelligence that the proposals of their ruler had been listened to at St Petersburgh. They now saw before them nothing but the prospect of the most cruel and lingering death; and their suspicions of their leader, by whom they had been betrayed, were confirmed. He saw this, and once more humbled himself so far, as to send Count Lauriston to the Russian head quarters, to demand, that if Prince Kutusoff would not listen to negociation, he should forward a letter from Buonaparte to the Emperor Alexander. "I will do that," (replied Kutusoff) "provided the word *peace* is not expressed in that letter. I would not be a party in such an insult to my sovereign, nor have a hand in forwarding to him, what he would instantly order to be destroyed in his presence. You already know on what terms alone offers of peace will be attended to. His imperial majesty, we know, will keep firm to his resolves, as we shall stand stedfast in ours to support the independence of the empire." This reply was noble, and altogether worthy of the great general to whom it has been ascribed.—It may be remarked, however, that he seems to have entertained the strongest dislike to the interference of his master in these momentous negociations, and was very unwilling that any offers of peace from Buonaparte should be allowed to reach his ear. He assigns a reason for this, which is in the highest degree flattering to the character of the emperor; but there are some who have put a different interpretation on this transaction, and have insinuated that the firmness of Alexander might have been shaken by the artifices of his enemy. That the beneficent feelings of this great monarch might have been in some measure at variance with his policy, when the war was first undertaken, is extremely probable; but after the destruction of Moscow, and the forlorn condition of the invader, were known to him, it is difficult to discover what inducement he could have had to relax in his policy. The die was cast—the measure of Russian suffering had now been filled up; retribution was ready to overtake the foe; and in such circumstances, could the mildest and most paternal of sovereigns have interposed to arrest its progress? The prince might with all safety have trusted to

the resolution of his master; he must have known this; and, at all events, would scarcely, without authority, have dared to become responsible in circumstances so full of peril. The reasons which he assigned, therefore, when he declined to consult the cabinet of St Petersburgh, were doubtless those which really influenced him, whatever may be said by the calumniators of the Russian name.

The contemptuous refusal of Buonaparte's second offer for negociation exasperated him to madness, and he would assuredly have attempted something decisive in this moment of frenzy, had his fears not whispered to him, that his own soldiers had now become almost as dangerous to him as the enemy. The foreigners in his service deserted in thousands, and carried intelligence of all kinds to the Russians; even the French were seized with despair. There was neither advance nor retreat for them; no means of subsistence for the present, nor hope of deliverance for the future.—It remained for their leader but to make one further effort at negociation. Lauriston was again ordered into his presence, and desired, for the third and last time, to repair to the head-quarters of Prince Kutusoff with new proposals for an armistice, and with an offer that the French should evacuate Moscow, and take up a position in the neighbourhood, where the terms of a treaty might afterwards arranged.—The R[illegible]s were not to be deceived by su[illegible]ures; they had their enemy in [illegible] power; they had every thing [illegible]in by the continuance of [illegible], and every thing to lose by its [illegible]rupt and unseasonable termination; [illegible], above all, they were perfectly sensible that the evacuation of Moscow, which the French ruler seemed to hold out as an inducement, would have counteracted all their plans of vengeance. To the proposal for an armistice and a negociation for peace, the Russian general-in-chief replied with firmness, "It is not time for us to grant either the one or the other, when the campaign on our part is just opening."—Thus were extinguished all the hopes which had for a while sustained the sinking spirits of Buonaparte and his army. His disappointment on account of what was past, was equalled only by his apprehension of what was to come; and in order to withdraw from the scene of misery, which was every day extending around him, he abandoned Moscow, and returned to the palace of Petrofsky, where he had formerly expected the Russian authorities to welcome him to the capital. Here he was left to meditate on his errors, and form unavailing plans for extricating his followers from the difficulties which surrounded them.

The desire of revenge was the first impulse of his mind. He determined that Moscow should bear lasting marks of his resentment, and that whatever of its magnificence yet remained should fall a sacrifice to his disappointed hopes. He summoned his officers to the place where he had now fixed his residence; he ordered them to intimate to the soldiers that the barbarous warfare of the Russians had reduced the capital so much, that he could no longer avail himself of it as a military position, and that he had, therefore, determined on abandoning it. The severity of a Russian winter called upon him to provide for the comfort of his followers; and he meant therefore to lead them into other provinces of the empire, where all their wants would be supplied. When the return of spring should again open the field to their prowess, they would triumph in every quarter, and, advancing upon St Petersburgh, erase the name of Russia from the list of European nations.

Orders were given by Buonaparte to his generals, and by them announced to the army, to complete the destruction of Moscow. These orders were obeyed with ferocious alacrity; and scenes occurred of which it is impossible to give even a faint impression. The soldiers indulged all their vile passions with confidence, for their atrocities had the sanction of their leader. For eight days every species of crime was committed with impunity; nor did this memorable tragedy conclude until Moscow was no more. On this subject it is impossible to exaggerate; for every description must fall beneath the dreadful reality. Let him who doubts this, recollect to what a state of desperation the minds of the French soldiers had been wrought up by disasters and calamities of all kinds—let him recollect what a ruffian soldiery is even in their calmest moments—and then let him reflect also how much their audacious violence must have been inflamed under the sanction of that power which they were accustomed to obey. When he takes these circumstances into account, he may be able to form some faint idea of these disgraceful scenes; but he will yet have difficulty in believing, that in the nineteenth century the most unparalleled atrocities should have been committed by the armies of a nation, which pretends to greater refinement and humanity than the other states of Europe.

It was the intention of Buonaparte to have placed a garrison in the Kremlin, and to have retained military possession of Moscow. With this view, he employed his troops in fortifying the palace; but when he discovered the full extent of the perils to which he was exposed, he abandoned this project; he had the palace undermined, and gave orders that it should be destroyed. He thought proper to assign his reasons for taking this step. He told his followers that the Kremlin had not sufficient natural strength to be defended by a garrison of less than 20,000 men; that so many could not be spared without forfeiting advantages of greater moment, and that Moscow, now a heap of ruins, was not worth so great a sacrifice.—The enemy's official reports gave an exulting account of the success of this grand enterprise. "All the adjoining buildings having been emptied with great care, and the Kremlin being judiciously mined, at two o'clock in the morning of the 23d of October it was blown into the air by the Duke of Treviso (Mortier.) The arsenal, the barracks, the magazines, all have been destroyed. This ancient citadel, from which is dated the foundation of the empire, this first palace of the czars, exists no more!" This is, however, a very erroneous account of the enemy's success, for he was fortunately prevented from executing his plans to their full extent by the activity of the Russian corps in the neighbourhood, which arrived in time to save the greater part of this venerable edifice.

Early in the month of October the French sent out strong detachments from Moscow, that they might deceive Winzengerode and the other Russian generals as to the real movements of their army. It was at first supposed by the Russians that these detachments had been sent out merely to plunder the surrounding country; but they were soon undeceived by the reports of deserters and prisoners. Winzengerode received intelligence also, that the enemy's force still remaining in Moscow was very [illegible] duced; and on the 19th of [illegible] he observed that the corps under [illegible] tier, stationed on the Mosjaisk [illegible] had fallen back towards the capital. He sent a small party to reconnoitre the new positions which the enemy had taken up; and the Russians were enabled gradually to approach even to

the city without opposition. They were at last assailed, however, by a strong body of French infantry and cavalry, and must have been cut to pieces but for the opportune arrival of General Iliovaskoy, with the whole force under his command, by whom the French were repulsed.—Winzengerode was thus enabled to draw his forces round Moscow; and on the 22d he passed the barriers of the city, overthrew the enemy, and drove them under the guns of the citadel. At this moment the Russian general, accompanied by his aid de-camp, rode forward to the French lines, carrying a flag of truce, to intimate that further resistance by the enemy must be vain, and to propose a capitulation. The French answered by making the general and his aid-de-camp prisoners. This singular violation of the usages of war animated the Russians with resistless fury; and on the morning of the 23d of October, when the first mine was about to be sprung, which was to level the Kremlin to the ground, they marched forward under their general, Iliovaskoy, and seized the incendiaries with the torches in their hands. Thus was the Kremlin saved, and what remained of Moscow recovered to the Russian empire. Although Buonaparte, in his report, had remarked, "that the Kremlin exists no more," scarcely any part of it had been injured; and the Russians, besides recovering their ancient capital, had the satisfaction of saving from the flames thousands of sick and wounded French, with whom the palace, as well as the neighbouring churches, was crowded. The inhabitants of Moscow returned their desolated city; their wants supplied as well as circumstances ld permit; and every effort was made to mitigate as much as possible the severity of suffering, which no human power could altogether relieve. The return of the civil and military authorities contributed to the restoration of order; and, above all, the reappearance of the magnanimous Rostopschin filled every heart with confidence and joy.

Those who recollect, that to the councils and example of this nobleman the abandonment of Moscow has been chiefly ascribed, and whose hearts are too cold to sympathize with the feelings which at this moment inspired the people of Russia, may wonder that the apparent author of so many calamities should have excited any other sentiments than those of horror and indignation. To such persons he will appear in the light only of a desperate and unrelenting barbarian, filled with vulgar antipathies towards the more civilized enemies of his country, and altogether regardless of the sufferings of his fellow creatures.—A very different view of his character was taken by his more generous countrymen, who attributed to his wise councils, and heroic resolution, the deliverance of their country from a foreign yoke. He was not one of those selfish patriots, who advise others to submit to sacrifices from which they themselves would shrink; for as he was among the most resolute of his countrymen in recommending eternal resistance to the enemy, so was he among the foremost in setting an example of the virtues which he so strenuously inculcated. Besides his houses in Moscow, he had a fine villa in the neighbourhood, to which he set fire with his own hands, having first affixed to one of the gates the following singular notification: "For eight years I found my pleasure in embellishing this country retreat. I lived here in perfect happiness within the bosom of my family; and those around me largely partook of my felicity. But you approach, and the peasantry of this domain, to the number of 1720 human beings, fly for

mercy, and I set fire to my house! We abandon all, we consume all, that neither ourselves nor our habitations may be polluted with your presence. Frenchmen, I left to your rapacity two of my houses in Moscow, full of furniture and valuables, to the amount of half a million of rubles. Here you will find nothing but ashes"—So long as this memorable campaign shall be remembered, the name of Rostopschin will be pronounced with exultation and delight by all those who have any sympathy with the noblest virtues of human nature.

CHAP. XV.

Russian Affairs continued. The French prepare to retreat. They are surrounded by Difficulties. Account of the numerous Engagements which occurred during the Retreat—Of the Sufferings of the French—Of the Dispersion of their Armies, and their Expulsion from the Russian Empire. Buonaparte returns to Paris, and the Russians occupy Wilna.

THE reoccupation of the capital by the Russian troops, was an event of such importance, that the general-in-chief immediately availed himself of the opportunity now offered him for developing his plains, and explaining to his soldiers the condition to which their enemies had been reduced, and the glorious prospects which began to unfold themselves. The address, which he circulated throughout the army, contained many just remarks and noble sentiments; and at the same time gave so faithful a description of the state of Russian feelings at this great crisis, that it shall be inserted. It is dated the 31st of October, and declared to be for the instruction of the troops:

At the moment in which the enemy entered Moscow," says the general-in-chief, "he beheld the destruction of those vain hopes by which he had been flattered; he expected to find there plenty and peace; on the contrary, he saw himself deprived of every necessary of life; harassed by long marches; exhausted for want of provisions; wearied by our parties intercepting his slender resources; losing, without the honour of battle, thousands of his troops, cut off by our provincial detachments, and no prospect before him but the vengeance of an armed nation, threatening annihilation to the whole of his army. In every Russian he beheld a hero disdainful of his fallacious promises; in every state of the empire he met an insurmountable rampart of peril to his efforts. After sustaining incalculable losses by the attacks of our brave troops, he recognized at last the frenzy of his expectations, that the foundation of the empire would be shaken by his possession of Moscow. Nothing remained for him but a precipitate flight; the resolution was no sooner taken than it was executed; and he fled, abandoning nearly the whole of his sick to the mercy of an outraged people, and leaving Moscow on the 23d of the month completely evacuated. The horrible excesses which he committed while in that city are already well known, and have left an unconquerable desire of vengeance in the bottom of every Russian heart; but I have to add, that his impotent rage exercised itself in blowing up a part of the Kremlin, where, by a signal interference of Divine Providence, the sacred temples

and cathedral have been saved. Let us then hasten to pursue this impious enemy, while other Russian armies, once more occupying Lithuania, act in concert with us for his destruction. Already do we behold him in full flight, abandoning his baggage, burning his war carriages, and reluctantly separating himself from those treasures which his profane hands had torn from the very altars of God. Already destruction and famine spread confusion before Napoleon, and behind him arise the murmurs of his troops, like the sound of threatening waves. While these appalling sounds attend the retreat of the French, in the ears of the Russians resounds the name of their magnanimous monarch. Listen, soldiers, while he thus addresses you, 'Extinguish the flames of Moscow in the blood of our invaders.' Russians, let us obey this solemn command; our injured country, appeased by this great vengeance, will then retire satisfied from the field of war, and behind the line of her extensive frontier will take her august station, between peace and glory. Russian warriors, God is our leader!"—This address had great effect throughout the army, and redoubled the zeal of the soldiers to avenge the cause of their country.

While these great events occurred in the neighbourhood of Moscow, some affairs of considerable moment took place in other quarters. A short summary of these events, which may fix attention on the state of the detached corps during the intermediate period, will be necessary to a right understanding of their movements and operations, when they came to act under one great system against the retreating enemy.—The army of General Essen, in the neighbourhood of Riga, for some time maintained the position which it had taken up without molestation, and preserved its communication with the corps of Count Wittgenstein, which the enemy scarcely attempted to interrupt. The French, however, for a moment weakened their force, and withdrew from Mittau; and Essen, knowing the importance of this station, hastened to occupy it, and succeeded almost without resistance.—General D'Yorck, who commanded the Prussians in this quarter, advanced to retake the position. Essen, aware of the great superiority of the assailants, deemed it prudent to retire in the direction of Riga, where he endeavoured to unite his army to that of General Steingel, who was acting in front of this place.—Steingel's position was at this time threatened by the French, who had assembled in considerable numbers in the vicinity of Petergoff, and occupied a station which gave them many advantages. The Russian general advanced to the neighbourhood of a small village called Garossen, where, on the morning of the 31st of September, a severe engagement took place, in which the French succeeded at first in driving the Russians from their position, but were afterwards repulsed.—A similar attempt was made by the enemy four several times during the day, and the same result regularly followed. These affairs, and the intelligence that the Russians had received considerable reinforcements at Riga, induced Macdonald to form a closer junction with the Prussians; and this movement had the effect of liberating the corps which Wittgenstein had stationed to observe the French marshal at Dinaburg. The Prussian auxiliaries did not exert themselves on this occasion with very great zeal; the French already began to abandon the shores of the Dwina; and the Russian generals, unable to comprehend the object of these singular movements, thought that the enemy prepared to unite the whole of his tenth division, and fall at once upon Riga with his

combined forces. The Marquis of Panlutchi, who had assumed the command at Riga, took some additional measures of defence in consequence of these speculations; but far different indeed were the motives which now influenced the enemy's generals from those which were thus ignorantly ascribed to them.

The army of Steingel pursued its march after the advantages which it had just gained; and on the 10th of October found itself in close communication with a part of Wittgenstein's corps near Drissa. Wittgenstein instantly determined to turn so fortunate a circumstance to good account, by attacking the enemy at Polotsk, driving him from his works in that neighbourhood, and forcing him to retreat by Vitepsk, where he must be entirely separated from Macdonald.—On the morning of the 18th of October Count Wittgenstein's troops were in motion; by sun-rise the advance of both armies was engaged; and the French right was quickly attacked with great spirit by Wittgenstein in person. St Cyr, who commanded the enemy, and who had done every thing to recover his army that became an able commander, saw his right give way before the impetuosity of the Russians, and ordered up to its support a strong body of Bavarians, Saxons, and Poles. The fight was renewed with greater fury than before, but the enemy was compelled to yield to the valour of the Russians; the confusion which overtook his right spread rapidly through his other columns, and the retreat became general. The French retired within their intrenchments, and maintained an unavailing cannonade against their pursuers.—At five o'clock in the afternoon of the following day the Russians again advanced, and the enemy began to pour among them a dreadful fire from his intrenchments. The palisadoes, which guarded the city, were quickly carried by the Russians at the point of the bayonet; the battle raged in the streets; and St Cyr, perceiving that all hope of resistance was vain, gave orders for a retreat. General Steingel had in the meantime advanced in a different direction, and had driven the French to the very intrenchments which surrounded Polotsk, so that their retreat seemed to be cut off.—There was no alternative left to the enemy; and by three o'clock of the morning of the 20th of October he evacuated the city, crossed the Dwina, and took the road towards Vilezka, where he hoped to join his broken corps to that of Marshal Victor, who was now on his march to join the grand army with his reinforcements.—Thus terminated these sanguinary engagements, in which the enemy sustained a heavy loss in killed and wounded, besides 2000 prisoners, among whom were 45 officers of different ranks, including the general-in-chief St Cyr. The loss of the Russians was also severe.—As the enemy was vigorously pursued in his retreat by the cavalry belonging to the army of General Steingel, the whole country around was soon cleared, and St Petersburgh was happily delivered from the alarm which had been excited by the operations of this part of the invading army.

The Russian general-in-chief had ordered all the armies to advance with the greatest rapidity, around the retreating enemy.—And here it is proper to mention, that in the month of September, the armies of the Danube and of Tormozoff, had united in the neighbourhood of Loutsk; while the enemy had again over-run those parts of Volhynia which he had for a time abandoned. The Polish division under Dombrowski once more communicated with those of Renier and Prince Schwartzenberg; and several affairs unimportant, but for the gallantry displayed on both sides, oc-

curred betwixt their detached parties and those of the Russians.—On the 14th September, General Hertel attacked the enemy in front of Sloutzk, and pursued him into the town. He afterwards overtook them at some distance from this place, where a battle was fought, which ended in the dispersion of the enemy, who was compelled to seek shelter in the woods.—The object of these operations was the destruction of the enemy's magazines in this neighbourhood; and in this object the Russians completely succeeded, the whole of the places occupied by the French, with the stores, &c. having fallen into their hands.

When Renier and Schwartzenberg were apprised of the junction of Tormozoff's army with that of the Danube, they decided on retiring. They were actively pursued, however, in their retreat, and sustained great loss, till they reached a strong position in which they entrenched themselves.—On the 11th October, Tchichagoff came up with them, and prepared to attack them next day; but as the night was dark, the Austrian and French commanders availed themselves of this circumstance to evacuate their position, and to continue their retreat. The pursuit re-commenced so soon as the Russians discovered that the enemy had retreated, and was continued with such effect, that the allies did not venture to halt at the station which they had originally chosen, but continued their flight towards Bialistock.—Tchichagoff intended by these movements to dislodge the enemy from those districts of country on which his own troops depended for supplies; to cut off their communication with the grand French army, and to facilitate his own with the Russian army of the Dwina under Wittgenstein. In these objects he ultimately succeeded, and thus fulfilled the intentions of the commander-in-chief.

At this juncture, Admiral Tchichagoff received orders from Prince Kutusoff to hasten towards Minsk, and interrupt the retreat of the grand French army; he set out accordingly on the 1st November, and was expected by the 19th to reach the place of his destination.—Such were the arrangements made in this quarter to interrupt the invaders, who had now begun their flight through the Russian territories.

On the 4th October, the head-quarters of Kutusoff were at Litachsoka, on the Kalouga road. Before the Russian army took up this position, it had been abundantly supplied with provisions of all kinds from the neighbouring governments, and had received great reinforcements of new troops, which were rapidly disciplined and organised. The enemy was in no condition to meet them; he was suffering all manner of privations, and was harassed at all points by the troops who were fast closing round him. Before any decisive arrangement, therefore, had been made by the enemy, the Russians had completed their preparations; they had taken by storm the town of Vereya, which had been fortified and provisioned by the French, and formed a depot for their arms, ammunition, and plunder. The enemy, alarmed by the advance of the Russians towards this point, had sent a reinforcement from Mojaisk to support the governor; but it arrived too late, and was almost wholly destroyed in retiring. The whole country in this direction was thus cleared; and the great obstacle to the movements of the left of the Russian grand army was removed.

The French armies now began to move on all sides towards the Dneiper; and the intentions of their chief were no longer doubtful. He saw the difficulties which surrounded him; he had no confidence in the issue of any attempt to cut his way through the

gathered hosts of his enemies; and he therefore had recourse to an expedient, which, although it threatened to sacrifice one part of his armies, promised to secure the flight of the other divisions, as well as his own personal safety. He sent towards Smolensko his carts, carriages, and waggons filled with plunder, ammunition, and wounded soldiers; and he dispatched a large force under Murat and Beauharnois to attack the Russian grand army by surprise, as if it had been his object to cut his way through it, and reach the fertile provinces in the south. He endeavoured at the same time to conduct the other divisions under his own immediate command towards Minsk, where a grand depot had been established.—Even the partial success of this plan depended on the surprise of the Russian army by Murat and Beauharnois; but the Russian general was not to be so easily outdone. He had intelligence of the whole plan; he determined, instead of being surprised himself, to fall upon the French unexpectedly, and with this view he ordered some divisions of his army rapidly to advance under General Benningsen, and anticipate the enemy. This brave officer set out on his enterprise on the evening of the 17th October, and on the following day, his approach became known to the enemy, whom this unexpected occurrence altogether confounded.—One of the Russian columns was commanded by Count Orloff Denzoff, another by General Baggavant, and a third by Count Osterman Tolstoy. The French under Murat and Beauharnois, to the number of 50,000 men, presented an extended front, and waited the approach of the enemy.—A terrible fire was opened on the French from the Russian centre; a battery hastily constructed placed the enemy's line in the greatest danger; and the rout was nearly completed by the success of Orloff Denzoff, who turned the enemy's left flank, and attacked his rear with great impetuosity. The Cossacks made a furious charge; and the French were driven from the field in confusion.—They lost 2500 killed and wounded, 1000 prisoners, 36 pieces of cannon, besides ammunition, baggage and plunder, to an amount almost incredible.—The loss of the Russians was not so great; but they had to lament the brave General Baggavant, who was killed early in the action by a cannon ball. General Benningsen also was severely wounded.—The conduct of the Russian troops on this occasion was much praised by their superiors; their good order and discipline in particular were conspicuous. Prince Kutusoff remarked, "The circumstance in this victory that I dwell on with the greatest satisfaction is, that all the columns performed their movements with an order and tranquillity, more resembling the calm evolutions of a field-day, than the tumultous hour of battle."—General Benningsen said, "I cannot sufficiently express my approbation of the good order and courage with which the troops executed their different movements, and made their attacks. Their coolness and intrepidity, as well as discipline, cannot be excelled. They have covered themselves with glory. In justice to the other part of the army, which circumstances did not permit to join in the action, I must add what is due to them, that the commanding disposition which they took on the extended heights to the left, materially facilitated the brilliant issue of this memorable day."—Of such materials were those Russian armies composed, of whom many persons affected to entertain a very mean opinion.

The plans of Buonaparte had been entirely defeated; and his mind was now filled with despair.—He has been blamed for the movement which

brought on this fatal encounter, and apparently with justice. It was his duty, in retreating from Moscow, to have kept as long as possible at a distance from the Russian army, to have avoided rousing it into immediate action, and to have directed the movements of his columns to the northward by the Mojaisk road. By the course which he pursued, he manifestly sacrificed any temporary advantages which he might have gained by the protracted inactivity of the Russians, and at once precipitated his armies upon their destroyers.—But after the defeat of the 18th October, it was too late to deliberate; every thing which was afterwards done was prompted by despair alone; for there seemed even at this early period of the retreat to be no longer any hope of escape for the invaders.—On the 19th of October, Buonaparte ordered the whole of his army to break up; the divisions under his own command to move directly upon Mojaisk, and those under Murat and Beauharnois to attempt gaining the same point by a more circuitous route. Kutusoff, for a short time, resumed his position at Touratino, that he might direct the movements of his armies according to the intelligence which he should receive of the enemy; and he ordered 25 new regiments of Cossacks, under Platoff, to scour the country in all directions, and harass the invaders.

And now, indeed, a scene of horrors commenced, to which no parallel can be found in history. Flight, disgrace, fatigue, famine, pestilence—misery, in short, in all the varied aspects which it can assume, was before the view of the French soldier. At this awful moment there was no ray of hope but for those who were so ignorant and credulous (if indeed there were any such) as to believe the promises of their leader, who had so woefully deceived them. He himself and his generals saw clearly the disasters that were so fast approaching; yet did they make a thousand efforts to conceal them from their followers, and to encourage the drooping spirits of the soldiers with hopes of plenty and repose, which were never to be realised. So sensible was Buonaparte of the overwhelming difficulties of his situation, that he had already meditated his own escape, and the abandonment of his armies; already did he cease to command men who were no longer entitled to the name of soldiers, among whom discipline was unknown, and military virtue forgotten, unless when they were called forth by despair. To his generals he, in a great measure, abandoned the care of this unhappy multitude, and began to retire from the indignant view of thousands of wretched beings whom he had led on to inevitable destruction. Surrounded by his favourite generals, and accompanied by his guards, he seemed to think only of the means of ensuring his own return to that country which so few of his followers were ever to revisit.

Murat, in the first instance, endeavoured to reach the neighbourhood of Minsk; but found his advance encompassed by so many perils, that he resolved on joining his forces to those of the main army on the road to Mojaisk.—Kutusoff ordered his troops to advance; with one part of the army he moved on Krasnoy, and directed the advance under Miloradovitch to move in a parallel direction betwixt himself and the enemy. The Cossacks and light troops sustained, as usual, their harassing and destructive warfare—broke down the bridges in the enemy's line, and contributed essentially to those memorable disasters, which form the conclusion of this eventful story.—A short account of the exploits performed about this period by these savage warriors cannot be uninteresting.

Platoff, the celebrated leader of the Cossacks, received intelligence on the 30th October, that a large convoy, strongly escorted, was on its way towards Smolensko. He came up with it near the monastery of Kolotsk at day-break on the 31st, and began a spirited attack upon its left flank. The enemy shewed no disposition to resist; but the Cossacks having pressed on with their wonted impetuosity, great slaughter ensued. Two entire battalions of French were cut to pieces in this affair; and the object of the victors was attained by the desperate resolution of the fugitives, who blew up the whole of their waggons.

Straggling parties of the enemy, rendered frantic by suffering, broke off from the main body in quest of sustenance, which was scarcely to be found in this desolated tract of country. It was seldom they were allowed to rejoin their comrades, such were the activity and skill of the warriors by whom they were beset. Platoff gives the following description of the state of the enemy about this period:—"The retreat of the French," he observes, "is a flight without example, abandoning every thing that demands carriage, even to their sick and wounded. The traces of their career are marked with every species of horror; at every step is seen the dying and the dead, not merely those who have fallen in battle, but the victims of famine and fatigue. In two days, even in sight of my division, their despair has blown up one hundred ammunition waggons, while the sudden movement of my troops has compelled them to leave untouched almost an equal number. We destroy these fugitives wherever we meet them; and when they attempt to make a stand, the brave sons of the Don, assisted by their artillery, and the chasseurs, soon relieve the empire of hundreds of its invaders."—An instance of such a stand as that mentioned by Platoff, occurred on the 20th November; the enemy had assembled a considerable force near Gchatz; he had placed cannon in his front, and had lined the neighbouring woods with tirailleurs. The Cossacks quickly cleared the woods of the tirailleurs, and then fell upon the enemy's wings with their cannon. After two hours the enemy was put to flight, and pursued next day till the scattered fugitives found a temporary protection from the corps of Davoust, with which they were fortunate enough to unite. Seventy waggons, 20 pieces of cannon, with several stands of colours, rewarded the activity of the Cossacks.—On the very same day, Count Orloff Denizoff discovered a vast concourse of miserable beings, who, hunted by the Cossacks from the woods where they had sought shelter, assembled on the high road. He immediately attacked them; they made some show of resistance, but were soon overpowered. Upwards of 1000 prisoners, besides waggons, &c. were taken by the Russians.

General Miloradovitch, who commanded the advance of the grand Russian army, and to whom had been confided nearly one half of its force, came into contact with the French in the neighbourhood of Wiasma. On the morning of the 2d November, he confounded the fugitive army by his unexpected appearance before this place; and as it was an object of great importance to the enemy to facilitate the movements of the other corps in their retreat, a line of battle was immediately formed by Murat, Beauharnois, and Ney, with the troops under their command. But they were not allowed time to take advantage of the positions which presented themselves; and the resistance which they made was wholly unavailing. They were assailed by the Russians with such impetuosity,

that in spite of the insulated acts of bravery to which the French were roused by despair, the contest was not long sustained. The Russians pushed them into the town at the point of the bayonet—the carnage was dreadful, and the enemy was compelled to give way in all directions. Beauharnois made a hasty retreat to Douchovechina; Davoust and Ney took the road to Dorogonbouche, and the stragglers and fugitives scattered themselves along the banks of the Dnieper, without purpose and without hope. In this murderous affair the French lost 6000 men killed and wounded, and 28 pieces of cannon. The pursuit was continued by the conquerors till darkness imposed a temporary check on their ferocity.—The night which followed was indeed dreadful to the scattered French; now for the first time did the Russian winter, which they had so much dreaded, but of which their imaginations could form but a faint picture, set in with more than usual severity. The fall of snow was considerable, the frost became intense, and a new enemy, of which the French had as yet no experience, thus appeared to consummate the work already begun by famine, pestilence, and the Russian sword. Their leader had, in the pride of conquest, taught them that they ought to despise a Russian winter, that they ought to rise superior to accident and circumstances. He had made them believe that his foresight, his comprehensive genius, would make every provision for their comfort and security; and now they were destined to experience the fallacy of all their expectations. The soft inhabitants of a warm climate sunk at once under the trial which the hardy sons of the north heeded not; and the genius and discipline of the finest European army were compelled to give way before the native courage of the northern barbarians, which yielded not to the accidents of climate and seasons, but stood erect and threatening amid the desolation of nature.

From the moment that the Russian winter set in, the French seem to have lost all their military ardour. They no longer thought of meeting their enemies; they scarcely even tried to secure their retreat. Protection against the miseries which they suffered; relief from extreme hunger and piercing cold, formed the only objects of their future enterprises. The picture given by eye-witnesses of their famished appearance; their ghastly mien, their frantic demeanour in this dreadful season, might obliterate for a moment the recollection of their crimes, and drive from the mind every other feeling, but that of pity for the unfortunate victims. "Many thousands," we are told, "died from cold alone; famine destroyed still more; while others perished by the sabres and bayonets of the Russians. Diseases, unheard-of before, seized the unfortunate survivors; madness, produced by extreme suffering, became frequent through the army; and the most frantic and horrible deeds, which history would willingly consign to oblivion, were committed by the sufferers. The Russians, however, were insensible to the sufferings of their enemy; they had been too deeply injured by him to think for a moment of the miseries which he endured; and had felt too sensibly the insult which his invasion had offered to their country, to rest satisfied but with his destruction." . . .

The retreat of Beauharnois towards Dorogobauche, and his attempt to cross the Dnieper at that point, were foreseen by the Russian general; and effectual measures were taken to impede his movements. The Cossacks, of whom Buonaparte about this time complained so much, followed the course of the retreating army; and exerted themselves not only for his

destruction, but for the protection of the numerous villages, which had yet escaped the fury of the invader. The Field Marshal Kutusoff, about this period, paid high compliments to the zeal and bravery of these warriors. "The Cossacks," said he, "perform miracles of bravery; they not only destroy columns of the enemy's infantry, but fall with undaunted resolution upon his artillery; they destroy all that opposes them. Indeed, the same spirit animates the whole of the Russian army."—While Beauharnois was accelerating his retreat, one of his divisions was met at a small village by the Cossacks under Platoff, who instantly attacked the enemy at all points. The French were surrounded in a moment; and the whole division fled in different directions; one part taking the road to Douchovaschina, and the other that of Smolensko. A body of troops was dispatched by Platoff in pursuit of the one; while he himself, at the head of a strong detachment of his warriors, followed the fugitives under Beauharnois, with whom he came up on the following day near the banks of the river Vope. An obstinate contest began; the Cossacks fighting with their usual ardour, and the French sustaining themselves with all the courage of despair.—The enemy was at last forced to give way, after losing 1500 killed, 3500 prisoners, upwards of 60 pieces of cannon, besides baggage, standards, &c. Thus was the division under Beauharnois almost entirely cut to pieces by the vigorous efforts of the Cossacks and light troops, unassisted by the other bodies of the Russian army.

And here it may be remarked, that it is impossible to peruse the official accounts of the French in this campaign without the strongest suspicion of their fidelity. They are not only contradictory to all the accounts which the Russians have published, but what is far more material, they are contradictory of themselves in many points, and at variance with the whole train of events. It would be highly interesting to have an account of this extraordinary campaign from the pen of an honest and intelligent French officer; but in the absence of such accounts, which we can hardly expect to receive, any thing in the shape of a French report which bears the marks of even ordinary candour, cannot be without its value.—A Russian party chanced about this time to intercept a courier with dispatches from Beauharnois to his friends at Smolensko; and the following letters, which express without disguise the extremities to which the general was reduced, have been published. They are addressed by the Viceroy to the Prince of Neufchatel and Wagram; and the first of them dated November 7th, 1812, is in the following terms: "I have the honour to inform your highness, that I put myself in motion at four o'clock this morning; but the badness of the roads and severity of the frost opposed so many obstacles to the march of my division, that our van only was able to reach the place by six in the evening, the rest taking up a position nearly two leagues behind. At five in the morning, the enemy appeared on our right, attacking at the same instant our van, our centre, and our rear, with artillery, Cossacks, and dragoons. At the head he found an opening of which he took immediate advantage, and, charging with a loud huzza, made a prize of two pieces of regimental cannon, which had been stopped by a steep acclivity at some distance from the escorts. The 9th regiment ran to recover them, but they had been already carried off. On the rear-guard, the enemy opened a fire from four guns, and General Ornano believes that he saw infantry

on every other point with two pieces of cannon each; but he does not assert it as a positive fact. Your highness must allow that my situation is extremely critical; embarrassed as I am by the quantity of baggage with which I have been forced to encumber myself, and by a long train of artillery, of which, without exaggeration, 400 horses have died this day. Nevertheless I shall continue my march by dawn to-morrow with the intention of reaching Pologgie, when I shall endeavour to learn that information which must determine whether I shall proceed to Douchovechina or to Pueva. I will not conceal from your highness, that, after making every sacrifice to carry forward the artillery, I am at last under the necessity of abandoning so fruitless an attempt. In our present situation, we must be prepared to make great sacrifices; and this very day several guns have been spiked and buried."—The second dispatch is dated the following day. "I enclose to your highness," says the viceroy, "a letter, which though written by me yesterday, failed of reaching you, the officer, who was to have delivered it, having been led astray by his guide. Your highness will be surprised to find me yet upon the Vope. I have not, however, been the less active in quitting Zescha by five this morning; but the roads are so cut by ravines, that it has required almost miraculous efforts to reach even this far. It is with the most painful feelings that I discover the necessity I am under of confessing to your highness, the great sacrifices we have made to expedite our march. These three days only have cost us two-thirds of our artillery, and of the troops; 400 horses died yesterday, and to day I have lost double that number, not including any of those I was obliged to procure for the baggage-waggons and other carriages. Whole trains perished nearly at the same instant, several of which had been three times renewed. To-day this division of the army has not been disturbed in its march. Some thought they perceived Cossacks without artillery; but that circumstance not being usual, it may be a mistake. If the report of one of the voltigeurs, who was sent out on a marauding party, may be believed, he was followed by a column of infantry and artillery, taking the same direction with ourselves. To-night I send a strong reconnoissance upon Douchovechina, which place I expect to reach to-morrow, provided the enemy does not oppose a serious resistance to my march; for I must not conceal from your highness that the sufferings of these three last days have so completely depressed the spirits of the soldiery, that I fear that they are at this moment incapable of making any sort of exertion. Many of the troops are dead from famine and from cold, and others in despair have suffered themselves to be taken by the enemy."—Such is the strain in which the French bulletins of this period ought to have been written, if it had been the object of their author to make the truth known; but they were framed in a very different style, and full of an ostentation which was once dangerous, but is now only ridiculous.

It has been remarked, that Beauharnois, by directing his course towards Douchovechina, and losing his communication with the army, must have made so great a sacrifice solely with the view of relieving the small remnant of his followers from the famine with which they were threatened. He may have expected to reach Vitepsk, and to find some supplies; but in this as well as in his other projects, he was entirely disappointed by the active zeal of his enemies, who hung upon his dismayed legions,

all they were wholly dispersed or destroyed; and never lost sight of the commander and his staff, till they were fairly driven into Smolensko.—Thus perished one grand division of the French army, which could hardly in any circumstances have escaped, but might, at all events, have been somewhat more prosperous, but for the obstinacy of the French ruler, who thought fit to encumber it with artillery, which greatly impeded its movements A sort of fatality seemed to mark all his measures during these direful scenes; for although, from the moment he quitted Moscow, the rapidity of his flight ought to have been his sole object, yet, as if he had intended to impede the march of his soldiers—to bear them down by a burden now become useless—to expose them to the mercy of their enemies, and to hasten their final overthrow, he gave strict orders that they should drag along with them, through roads nearly impassable, the whole of their cannon. They could not in such circumstances accelerate their movements; and in this manner they became an easy prey to their eager and enterprising enemies.

A great part of the French army had now reached the vicinity of Dorogobouche; and a detachment had been ordered at some distance from the village to construct an additional bridge across the Dneiper. The Russian general Miloradovitch with the advanced guard fell upon this detachment and destroyed it, after which he crossed the river with his whole force, and marched upon the town. The French had here taken up a fine position, and were resolved to defend it to the utmost extremity. Their right was secured by the river; but the Russians attacked their left with energy; and although a good defence was made, the French were compelled, after a resistance of two hours, to give way at all points. Cannon and baggage and ammunition waggons were taken by the Russians; 6000 prisoners also fell into their hands; and so great was the carnage in the enemy's ranks, that the field of battle was covered with his killed and wounded. Dreadful, indeed, must have been the fate of the latter, who were left to perish, with their wounds exposed to the biting frosts which had now set in with unwonted severity.

Count Orloff Denizoff, with a detached corps, had pushed forward in a direction parallel to that of the main army under Miloradovitch; and, on arriving at the village of Kolpitha, he learned that the enemy under the Brigadier-General Augereau, to the number of 9000 or 10,000 men, were distributed in some small villages in the neighbourhood. He first attacked those stationed at a place called Liachavo, and compelled them to surrender. Their comrades sent a detachment to their assistance, which, on its way, was attacked by the Russians and cut to pieces. The Count did not stop on achieving these successes; for the very next day he proceeded to clear the remaining villages of the enemy. He attacked a large convoy with an escort of about 6000 men, advancing from Mohiloff towards Smolensko; he fell on them unexpectedly, killed 1500, and took many prisoners, besides waggons, cattle, ammunition, and other stores destined for the grand army.—Thus were the hopes of the French, that they should find provisions and ammunition at Smolensko, on which they were now moving, wholly blasted by the enterprise of the Russian armies.

On the 9th November, Buonaparte entered Smolensko; and incredible as it may seem, he arrived in this city in the most perfect ignorance of the movements and positions of his pursuers. He expected to reach Minsk

before Tchichagoff, with his army of the Danube, could arrive there, after clearing Volhynia of the invaders; and down to this period, he seems to have been ignorant of the rapid advance of his enemies.—Prince Kutusoff, with the main body of his army, on the 13th November, advanced so far as Lobcovo. But the French ruler, whose usual circumspection seems to have abandoned him—who had already determined to desert his unfortunate army, to resign the project of conquering Russia, and to secure his own return to France, knew not how near his enemies had approached, nor the fate which was reserved for the remainder of his mighty host.

While the French remained at Smolensko on their retreat, they rendered themselves infamous by all sorts of excesses. The desperate condition of their affairs did not for a moment interrupt them in their crimes. Smolensko had already suffered much from their invasion; but the disappointment of all their hopes on arriving at this place, where they expected relief, precipitated them into enormities scarcely known in the history of modern warfare. There lived in the neighbourhood of Smolensko, a brave and patriotic man (Colonel Engelbart), who had defended his house with success against the straggling parties of the foe; who had cut down some of them with his own hand; who was becoming formidable by the confidence which his courage inspired among his countrymen; and who was, therefore, a fit object for the vengeance of the invaders. But his courage and talents for a while defied all their efforts; and he was undone at last not by the skill of his enemies, but by the treachery of his pretended friends. A base wretch, whom he had unsuspectingly admitted into his confidence, delivered him into the hands of the enemy; and that enemy was not generous enough to respect his courage and patriotism. After one of the mock trials, which must for ever disgrace the history of this age, he was condemned to die as a felon.—When this gallant man was brought before his judges, he made to all their interrogatories this firm reply; "I have only done my duty as a Russian subject. The obligation of opposing them who would disturb the peace of our legitimate sovereign, and destroy our country, is imposed by the divine laws upon us all; and I have nothing to regret, but that I am restrained by these fetters (he was loaded with chains) from dying in the act of inflicting vengeance upon our invaders."—Colonel Engelbart died with the bravery and resignation which became his character and his cause; and his fate is but one instance among thousands of the atrocities committed by the French during their stay at Smolensko.—Who can read with pity the accounts of the sufferings of the invaders, when he recollects the fate of Engelbart?

The destruction of its ancient ramparts and fortifications was the last act of the invaders before abandoning Smolensko: a number of sick were left in the hospitals; and, the order for the destruction of the ramparts concludes with a recommendation, that "as few of these as possible" should be left. They set fire to the mines which had been prepared, and reduced the ramparts of Smolensko to a heap of ruins. They immediately hastened their retreat, and proceeded to join their master, who, on the 15th of November, had set out for Krasnoy.

The Russians continued to follow the French, who, in moving from Smolensko to Krasnoy, were much harassed by their enemies. When Buonaparte reached Krasnoy, he became better informed as to the movements of his pursuers, and he felt the greatest anxiety for the arrival of the

corps under Davoust, to which the destruction of Smolensko had been committed. He took every precaution, however, which his present circumstances would permit; he disposed his troops in the best positions which the neighbouring grounds afforded; and he provided for his own retreat, should his affairs become desperate, by occupying the village of Dobre. But his destiny had ordained, that in the very position which he now occupied he should be a witness of the entire annihilation of one grand division of his troops. Davoust, for whose approach he was so impatient, was never again to meet him but as a fugitive after the destruction of his followers.

On the 17th of November, General Miloradovitch, who was fully apprised of the movements of Davoust, prepared for his approach by posting his troops in ambuscade behind a village on the road to Krasnoy. Cossacks, light troops, and artillery, were also ordered to approach the village of Dobre, that the marshal might have no hopes of retreat in this direction. Davoust advanced with the appearance of perfect security till he had gained the first of these villages, when the Russians suddenly attacked him at all points, and pressed him so much, that all his efforts to form his soldiers, and to attempt resistance, were unavailing. He was soon overpowered, and his army routed and dispersed.—Buonaparte, surrounded by his guards, witnessed this desperate encounter, but he did not stop to support the general and his soldiers. Those who escaped destruction from the Russians betook themselves for shelter to the neighbouring woods, which cover the banks of the Dnieper, where they at last found in death relief from their sufferings.—The French loss, on this occasion, was very great; 4000 of them were killed or wounded—upwards of 9000, including 60 officers, were taken prisoners: 70 pieces of cannon, 3 standards, the baton of Davoust, with the whole of his baggage, fell into the hands of the conquerors.—Such a result seemed to resemble the works of enchantment rather than the efforts of human courage and dexterity.

Ney's division, which formed the rear guard of the army, left Smolensko on the very day of this decisive victory. The Russian general-in-chief determined that it should share the same fate; for this purpose he reinforced the corps under Miloradovitch, and had strong detachments of troops, supported by artillery, stationed on th high road which leads to Krasnoy. When the French marshal first observed the Russian troops, he declared to his followers that they were mere reconnoitring parties; but when a tremendous fire opened from the Russian batteries—when his soldiers, in spite of every effort to form, and to give battle to their enemy, were thrown into confusion, then indeed he was forced to confess his error, and to hasten his retreat with the small remnant of his division. He was rapidly pursued by the Russian General Korff; and he himself, with a small proportion of his staff, alone escaped to recount to his master the disastrous tale.—The Russians afterwards met with the last party of the French rear guard, amounting to 11,000 men, which, after a feeble resistance, was compelled to surrender.—Thus were some of the finest divisions of the French army,—those of Beauharnois, Murat, Davoust, and Ney, entirely destroyed; but a fate, not less severe, was about to overtake their wretched companions.

General Count Wittgenstein, who had already gained so much honour during this campaign, although still ignorant of the movements of the grand armies, sustained his victorious career against the divisions of the

French under St Cyr, Oudinot, and Victor.—The capture of Polotsk, which the count, assisted by General Steingel, had accomplished, was followed by the advance of some Bavarians, who forced Steingel to fall back on Disna. Here he was joined by a strong detachment from Wittgenstein's army, with the aid of which he drove the Bavarians from the ground, pursued them, and took the greater part of their baggage and ammunition. The Bavarians were thus cut off from all communication with the corps of St Cyr, which hastened towards Lepel to join Victor, who had advanced so far with reinforcements for the grand army. Wittgenstein having sent a detachment to watch the movements of Macdonald, set out to pursue the enemy under St Cyr—to prevent the junction of Victor with the grand army under Buonaparte, and to establish a communication betwixt his own corps and that of the Danube under Admiral Thichagoff.—The corps under St Cyr succeeded on the 30th of October in forming a junction with Victor's reinforcement, amounting to 15,000 men, posted in the immediate vicinity of a village called Tcharniki. The Russian general resolved on dislodging them from this position; and on the 31st succeeded, after a short resistance, in pursuing the enemy as far as Semno.—Wittgenstein then advanced his army to the village of Smolnya, and detached a body of troops under General La Harpe to take possession of Vitepsk, which was done accordingly on the 8th of November.—It was here that Wittgenstein and his followers learned, for the first time, the disastrous retreat of the French grand army, and the altered posture of Russian affairs; and they became impatient to signalize themselves still more in the great work of national vengeance.

Marshal Victor, smarting under the chastisement which he had lately received, meditated an attempt to remove the stain from his military character. He ordered up a reinforcement of 3000 men; he called in the whole of his detached parties, and, assisted by Oudinot, who had by this time recovered from his wounds, he determined to attack the Russians under Wittgenstein at Smolnya. The Russian advanced guard, on the approach of the enemy, retired upon the main body; and Victor found himself in front of the centre, which was strongly protected by cannon. A very severe engagement followed; the village of Smolnya was taken and retaken six different times; its streets were dyed with blood, and covered with heaps of slain. The battle was not less obstinate on the different flanks, against which the French advanced in great force; but the grape-shot which was poured into their ranks from the Russian guns, at last forced them to retire. The French marshal perceived with dismay the probable result of this day's affair; but with the energy of a man who had his reputation at stake, he endeavoured to rally his forces, and push them forward once more to the assault. The momentary resolution, however, with which he was able to inspire his soldiers, gave way before the Russian bayonets, and victory again declared for the army of Wittgenstein. The French marshal made a last effort to turn the flank of the Russians, but here too he was unfortunate.—The loss of the French in the severe conflict of this day, has been estimated at 1500 killed and wounded, and nearly as many prisoners: the Russians had 1000 men killed and wounded.

The 18th of November was rendered memorable in the history of this campaign, by the arrival of Colonel Czernicheff from the army of the Danube at the head-quarters of Count

Wittgenstein, after one of the most extraordinary marches recorded in the military annals of the world. He had to encounter at every step numerous bands of the enemy; but these he either eluded or overcame, frequently seizing their convoys, and destroying the escorts which accompanied them. In other respects, his march was such as no other than Russian troops could have accomplished; he had many rivers to cross, and he had no leisure to construct bridges, but he and his troops, without difficulty, swam across even at this inclement season of the year. On his arrival he brought to Count Wittgenstein the welcome intelligence of the flight of the Austrian and Saxon auxiliaries, the utter ruin of the grand French army, and the rapid advance of the Russians in pursuit. A few days afterwards the general aid-de camp Kutusoff also arrived, and confirmed the whole intelligence brought by Czernicheff, by announcing to the count that he was now in communication with Platoff and with the main army.—The whole force of the Russian empire was now in full communication, and the circle was thus completed around the remains of the French armies.

The army of the Danube had directed its movements upon Minsk. The advanced guard, under Count de Lambert, in its progress towards this place, fell in with a detachment from the corps of Dombrowski, and made them prisoners to the number of 4 or 5000 men.—On the 16th of November the whole army reached the place of its destination; and General Lambert was instantly sent forward to complete the destruction of the army under the Polish general.—On the 21st the Russians appeared before the works which he had constructed, and attacked them with vigour. The rout of the enemy was soon completed. Upwards of 4000 of his troops were made prisoners; the remainder made a hasty retreat upon Orcha.—The town of Berisoff fell into the hands of the Russians, who spread themselves over the left bank of the Beresina in all directions, that they might destroy the bridges, and prevent Buonaparte and his army from effecting the passage of the river.

The prospect which lay before Buonaparte when he reached Orcha, was not such as to raise his sinking spirits. Minsk, in which he had accumulated stores of all kinds, and where he had promised himself a short repose, was already in the hands of the Russians. The corps of Oudinot and Victor, on which he relied for support, were dispersed; and even his Polish ally Dombrowski had been unable to retain a position which might have secured for the retreating army the passage of the Beresina. A Russian corps occupied the left bank of this river, and was hastening to intercept his flight; and all the armies, those of the Danube and Dwina, as well as the grand army, were closing upon him. There was not a moment to be lost, if he hoped to secure even his person from captivity; and he immediately quitted Orcha, giving orders at the same time that the passage of the river should be secured by any sacrifice.

The disasters which Buonaparte had sustained could no longer admit of concealment, and his bulletins indicated the altered state of his affairs. "The army," said he in one of these famous productions, "so complete on the 6th, became very different after the 14th, nearly destitute of cavalry, of artillery, and of transport carriages. Without cavalry it was impossible for us to reconnoitre beyond the distance of a quarter of a league; while without artillery we could not risk a battle and firmly remain in expectation of the enemy. It was indispensable for us to occupy a certain space of groun

to avoid being turned, and thus, without cavalry, to unite the columns, and advance for the purpose of observation. This difficulty, joined to the suddenness of the intense cold, rendered our situation extremely vexatious. Those feebly constructed men, to whom Nature had denied the power of rising above the changes of place and fortune, appeared shaken, lost their gaiety and good humour, and brooded over present suffering and future calamity; but such as she had created superior to every accident, preserved their spirits and ordinary temper, and saw in every new obstacle additional glory."—These reflections on the difficulties of his situation were just and comprehensive; it was but a bad compliment, however, to the prescience and wisdom which he was so fond of arrogating, that he should have been thus compelled to regret his errors when they had become irretrievable. In proportion to the depth of his present misery had been his presumption when he advanced into Russia.—There are few, it is to be hoped, who will not think the worse of his heart for the unfeeling taunts which the above passage contains on the depression of spirits indicated by his soldiers, who, whatever may have been their errors, were surely entitled to some share of sympathy from the man whose ambition had plunged them in miseries, against which there are but few who could have borne up. In this part of his character, Buonaparte more nearly resembles the hereditary tyrant who has been educated in selfishness, than the adventurous soldier, who, having been indebted for his elevation to the courage and fidelity of his companions in arms, commonly retains for them a warm and generous regard.

The Russians had been detained at Krasnoy till their provisions and stores should arrive, the rapidity of their late marches having rendered it impossible to bring up these cumbrous appendages of the army. Buonaparte hastened to avail himself of this pause to effect his retreat across the river. He ordered Dombrowski, with the wreck of his division, to the left of Berisoff; Victor and Oudinot to the right to oppose Wittgenstein, while he himself advanced directly towards the Beresina.—He left Orcha on the 20th of November, and he had hardly reached the gates when the Cossacks, under Ogrosski, who had followed the rear of the fugitives, rushed along with them into the town.—Platoff, on the right bank of the river, continued his usual career. Having received intelligence that Marshal Ney was collecting the stragglers near the village of Goussinova, and proceeding with them to Orcha, the Cossack chief had an ambuscade prepared for them along the road which they were to pass; he fell upon them by surprise, and dispersed or destroyed them. Ney himself wandered a whole night among the woods, and was one of the very small number of his party who escaped the vigilance of the enemy.—Such affairs as this, how creditable soever to the corps engaged, make but a small figure in a narration of great battles, and are explained merely with the view of preserving the chain of events entire.

The army of Prince Kutusoff was once more in motion; and on the 26th of November it reached the city of Zezerinza, whence it was to move according to circumstances, either upon Bobre or the Beresina. Fortune, however, had determined that the last act of vengeance to be inflicted on the enemy upon the shores of this river should be directed by Count Wittgenstein. This officer advanced on the village of Holopalichi, with the hope that he might succeed in cutting off the corps of Oudinot and Victor, which now formed the rear guard of

the grand army. But he found them already retreating in such haste that he thought proper to turn round to intercept the foe in his flight by Lepel, and to act on Vesselova, through which the enemy might attempt to retire.—By these movements, however, Wittgenstein defeated the hopes of Victor, and cut him off from all communication with his master.—The French, who were hastening to Stoudentzi, made their appearance; a dreadful cannonade, succeeded by a furious onset of the Russians, overwhelmed them, and covered the ground with their slain. The Russian general supposed that Buonaparte himself was in the midst of the fugitives, and unwilling to continue the carnage, equally dreadful as it was useless, he sent a flag of truce to the enemy, who hesitated for a moment, but was soon relieved from his suspense by the appearance of the Cossacks. The French surrendered at discretion; 4 generals, nearly 300 other officers of different ranks, and about 8000 soldiers, were made prisoners. To the great disappointment of the Russians, however, Buonaparte was not of the number; and Wittgenstein lost not a moment to search for him in another quarter. —The French had constructed two bridges, the one at Stoudentzi, and the other at Vasselova; and at the latter point, where Buonaparte succeeded in passing the river, a scene ensued which baffles all description. Wittgenstein reached the spot just as the bridges were completed, and when Buonaparte, surrounded by his guards, was making his escape. A lively cannonade was commenced, and the unhappy fugitives, who saw no safety but in flight, scarcely attempted resistance. They rushed in crowds towards the bridge; they plunged into the river; nothing could save them from the fury of the Russians. Those who found the bridges preoccupied on their arrival, rushed into the stream in a state of desperation; but large fragments of ice covering the waters, defied their utmost efforts to reach the opposite shore, and bore them down with resistless impetuosity. The air was filled with a confused noise—with the roaring of the Russian cannon, and the shrieks of the despairing enemy—with the mingled horrors of vengeance and agony. And that this scene of misery might be complete in all its parts—that nought might be wanting to fill up the measure of Buonaparte's guilt, at the very moment when the bridge was crowded with his hapless followers, it was blown up by his order. This cruel expedient saved him from the immediate pursuit of his enemies, and perhaps it fortunately put an end to the unexampled sufferings of the French soldiers; but it will be a lasting stain on the memory of its contriver. On such a point it were useless to reason; the universal feelings of our nature must decide the controversy. It signifies not that by this act Buonaparte secured himself and that part of his army which had already passed the river from the pursuit of the Russians; and it were monstrous to refer to the misery of the French armies as an apology for the mandate which at once consigned thousands of them to destruction. Had Buonaparte, like a brave and generous commander, sustained his sinking troops by his presence to the last moment—had he himself been in the rear of the fugitives, and the last man to pass the bridge, his order for blowing it up after the escape of his army, would have required no justification; but since he was among the first to escape—since his disregard of consequences became apparent only after he had saved himself—since on this, as on many other occasions, he sacrificed his soldiers to the most selfish considerations, impartial history must consign

him to reprobation. The events of this dreadful day must have gone far to efface the remembrance of all that was good or great in the character of the French ruler, even had his talents and achievements possessed an unquestionable title to the very highest renown.—In this memorable affair 5000 of the enemy were killed on the spot, as many were drowned, and 13,000 were taken prisoners, including a large proportion of officers. The artillery, baggage, and ammunition, which fell into the hands of the Russians, it would be difficult to estimate. The greater part of the plunder which the French had seized in the different Russian cities was recovered on this occasion, and nothing seemed wanting to complete the vengeance of Russia, but that the author of all her miseries should be secured. To accomplish an object, which all Russia now expected with such anxiety, Wittgenstein dispatched the general aid-de-camp Kutusoff towards Lepel, with instructions to cross the river at that point, and move with all haste on the enemy's flank, while Colonel Tettenborn was ordered to attack the Bavarians, and separate them from the French army. In this enterprise Tettenborn completely succeeded, after an affair in which he took 1000 prisoners; and every thing had thus been done by Wittgenstein which became a good general, who was impatient only because the fatal device of the enemy had prevented him from bringing the contest to a more rapid and decisive issue.

The army under Tchichagoff, which, with the Cossacks, occupied the left bank of the river, proceeded to accomplish what was no longer in the power of Wittgenstein. The fugitives were pursued with the most unrelenting activity, till the darkness of night overtook them, and favoured their retreat. Buonaparte, who was still accompanied by a few of his generals, too faithful to his fortunes, took shelter during the night in the woods which surround the village of Tchatchovo. His soldiers also sought security in the same retreats; and before the morning, he had contrived to give them for the last time some appearance of order, and to exhibit to the Russians a feeble resistance. He found this expedient necessary for the singular step which he determined immediately to take—the entire abandonment of his army. He wished to place them once more betwixt himself and the pursuing enemy, that he might not be interrupted in his flight. It was with the utmost difficulty the soldiers could be prevailed on to make any further exertion; and the marshals were seen riding along their ranks striving to revive their drooping courage. Oudinot alone could prevail on his followers to engage; but this last effort of their courage was not of long duration. Oudinot himself was severely wounded; and his followers abandoned themselves to despair.—Buonaparte, meanwhile, executed the plan which he had long formed, and in the midst of this afflicting scene, hastily set off towards the frontiers. To this measure he was urged partly by the difficulties of his situation in Russia, and partly by some recent occurrences in Paris.—A conspiracy had been discovered, which, if it had been conducted with any thing like talent or address, might have somewhat abridged the duration of his power. But the leaders seem to have been destitute of all capacity for their enterprise; and although they at first succeeded in exciting a slight commotion in the capital, they were speedily arrested and put to death. But the existence of such sentiments among the French people was enough to appal Buonaparte; and his return to France was probably hastened by the late discoveries.—To the honour of his mar-

tains, however, it should be mentioned, that they did every thing which could be required of skill and constancy to animate and sustain the drooping spirits of the soldiers; and by their good conduct, secured the retreat of their leader. But all their efforts soon proved unavailing; the progress of the Russians was marked on all sides by the confusion of their enemies, who were so completely overpowered, that they no longer retreated as an army, but dispersed in crowds to escape the immediate notice of their pursuers.—Never surely did more signal disasters overtake the army of a civilized nation.

Prince Kutusoff was no sooner apprised of the destruction of the bridge by which Buonaparte had crossed the Berezina, and the impediment thus thrown in the way of Count Wittgenstein, than he ordered new bridges to be erected for the passage of this general and his troops. His orders were promptly obeyed, and the count was soon in active co-operation with the right of the army of the Danube. Some parties were ordered to pass rapidly forward, even beyond Wilna; to destroy the bridges as they advanced, and to intercept the French ruler before he should pass the Niemen. The army of Tchichagoff, supported by the Cossacks, advanced in full pursuit; and the whole force of the Russian empire was thus again in motion. —Those who do not reflect that, from the time the French left Moscow, and for weeks before, they had been without any regular supply of food; that they had been exposed to fatigues almost incredible; compelled to meet what they were even less able to sustain, the severity of a Russian winter, and assailed at all points by an enraged and merciless enemy, will scarcely give credit to the account of their sufferings, on any authority inferior to that of an eye witness. No other words than those of a spectator, indeed, could do any thing like justice to this dreadful scene; and as it has been described by a person who had this advantage, it may be proper to give the details in his own hardly exaggerated language.—"Though besieged with miseries," says one of the Russian pursuers in a letter to his friend at St Petersburgh, "and assailed with all the fury of our cannon and our bayonets, it is certain that nearly 40,000 of our merciless invaders escaped to the nearest bank of the Beresina. But numbers of the fugitives, even in the moment in which they believed themselves safe, met their destruction; they plunged in to gain the opposite shore, and met the death from which they fled in the cold bed of the river, in the direful flames which rolled along its surface. They who escaped the flood and the conflagration, were not more secure, for all nature seemed to fight against them; Heaven itself appeared to hurl its last bolt against these sacrilegious hordes, by increasing the cold to a degree, that was almost intolerable to the best defended; but to those who had no covering, it was suffering worse than the tortures of the rack. It was at this crisis, when nearly deprived of the power of moving, they abandoned their guns, baggage, and ammunition, and throwing themselves upon the drifting snow, called on the blast to end their miseries. Then rising in frantic despair, they ran howling among each other, exclaiming aloud against their betrayer, and demanding death at the hands of their equally distracted companions. Thousands of these poor wretches were nearly naked; few had either a shoe, or boot, or pantaloon, to protect their freezing limbs. Many had endeavoured to shield them from the severity of the weather, by wrapping about them the raw hides they had stripped from the perished horses. Others covered their bodies with of

matting, canvas, women's clothes, priests' vestments, or any other thing that might assist in sheltering their emaciated persons from the piercing wind, and a frost that seemed to cut into their souls. Happy was he who had been so lucky as to have purloined from the countryman his winter sheepskin, or saved a pelisse from the general pillage. Officers and men were in the same condition. The wretched fragments which decency would still wrap round them, were tattered into a hundred shreds, but from the inclemency of the season there was no shelter. Thousands became benumbed and stupified; many dropped in silence into the grasp of death; others moved on their gradually freezing bodies, bewailing their fate, and cursing the name of him who had brought them into such depths of unimaginable suffering. Every corps and every rank of officers partook of the general distress. The guards even, the proud favourites of their proud chief, were alike the sport of the angry elements; were alike exposed to nakedness and privation. Their gay caparisons were changed into loathsome rags; and, a prey to every evil of squalid wretchedness, to hunger, and to cold, they dropped down dead in heaps, groaning out the reproaches their tongues were too feeble to utter. Defence was now totally out of the question. Flight, not escape, was their object; for none possessed within himself sufficient strength to preserve him in existence for many hours. It was not life they sought, but relief from the agonies of fear. An undefinable terror struck the soul of the famished wretch, who, stretched on the chilling snow, called fervently on death to release him from his misery. Even in this state let but the cry of *the Cossacks* be sounded in his ear, and it would be sufficient to rouse him to temporary energy; a thousand would partake his agony, and suddenly spreading in flight, they would every where darken the snow with their flying shadows, and fill the air with their despairing shrieks. In this state some thousands would be made prisoners, by a horde of perhaps no more than a hundred Cossacks. The road along which this ruined army moved was rough with their dead, who, heaped on each other, shewed through the uneven surface of the snow their grisly and disfigured visages, their perishing and dismembered bodies, and all the horrid variety of deaths inflicted by want and pain and the sword. Every *bivouac*, at the dawn of morning, resembled rather the place of a sanguinary conflict than that of rest. Cold and fatigue benumbed many into their last repose; but scarcely did the hand of death close their eyes before they were despoiled; nay, even while breathing, their companions seized on their expiring bodies, and stripped them of their ragged coverings to defend themselves.—Vast are the circles of the dead they leave behind them in their dismal night watches, and when they proceed in the morning, there is nothing before them but a similar fate; and, desperate with cold, they set every house and town on fire in their way, in order to alleviate with the heat the pangs which rack their joints. But the expedient is fraught with new sufferings. Hundreds hasten to the blazing scene to enjoy a few minutes warmth, but not having strength to retire with sufficient speed from the influence of the flames when they become outrageous, they fall a prey to their fury, and the ruins of the burning houses are surrounded with the expiring remains of their helpless consumers. Many of those who escape immediate destruction from the fire, seared by its flames, blackened in part by the smoke, otherwise pale as the snow itself, range themselves like a horde of ghastly

spectres upon the lifeless bodies of their countrymen, and there remain in motionless apathy, till the benumbing hand of death stretches by degrees over their vitals, and they fall amid the icy and scorched corpses of their comrades. Numbers having their feet frozen and half-mortified, were reduced to a situation of complete helplessness, and being left upon the road, were forced to abandon themselves to the death they might otherwise have averted for some time. In these days, now so cruelly cut off from their existence, some succours might arrive! The idea alone seemed to speak a hope of which they were for ever to be deprived; and their despair broke out in cries of the bitterest anguish; it was a lamentation that paralized the hearer, and made him feel the unparalleled depth of misery into which the French ruler had plunged his too confident followers. Multitudes of these desolate fugitives lost their spirits; others were seized with frenzy, and maddened by the extremes of pain and hunger. But I will not attempt a further enumeration of the varieties of human misery I have seen; those only who have witnessed such extreme of distress can form any idea of the horrors I have left yet untold—of the hideous spectacles exhibited between the Berezina and the Niemen, whose parallel for misery is not to be found in the annals of the world." —Such descriptions as these might seem fanciful, were they not confirmed by the authentic history of this campaign; by the fact, as striking as it is unquestionable, that, in the course of a very few months, betwixt three and four hundred thousand men fell a sacrifice to that complication of miseries of which the above passages profess to give an imperfect account.

There remained but little to be done by the Russians; the grand army was now annihilated. When Buonaparte reached Smeymo, he made his flight known to the world; he had before abandoned his soldiers, and he now formally appointed Murat to the command of the armies.—On the 7th he reached Wilna, accompanied by Caulaincourt, who was worthy of the honour now conferred on him.—The Russians did not relax the pursuit. Platoff, at the village of Orchniani, fell in with a small reinforcement advancing under Loison, and cut it to pieces. Tchaplitz, after destroying what was still called the rear-guard of the French armies, in the neighbourhood of Wilna, on the 10th attacked and carried the suburbs of that city; and on the following day entered it, at the very moment when the French were retiring. The enemy had no leisure to destroy any thing, and his whole stores and ammunition fell into the hands of the Russians.—Strong detachments of Cossacks and light troops were spread along the shores of the Niemen, to prevent the escape of Macdonald, and to ensure the destruction of his army.—On the 11th December, Tchichagoff addressed a report to the Emperor Alexander from the neighbourhood of Wilna, in which he estimated the loss of the enemy from the date of his passing the Beresina downwards, at no less than 30,000 men.—On the 12th, the head-quarters of Prince Kutusoff were established in the capital of Russian Poland.

Such was the issue of this eventful campaign, in which a greater number of sanguinary battles were fought than had ever been before crowded together within so short a space. Never surely was enterprise more disastrous than that of the French tyrant against Russia; never were persevering virtue and patriotism crowned with so signal a triumph, as upon this memorable occasion. Of an army consisting of more than 400,000 men, finely appointed, and commanded by the most distinguished captains of the

age, not more than 50,000, including the Austrian auxiliaries, ever re-crossed the Russian frontiers; while the revenge of an insulted people was gratified to the utmost by the unparalleled sufferings of their ruthless foes. Such was the awful retribution by which it pleased Heaven to chastise a cruel and profligate ambition, that dared to meditate the slavery of the human race.

APPENDIX.—GAZETTES.

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CAPTURE OF JAVA.

London Gazette Extraordinary, Tuesday, Jan. 21.

Downing-Street, Jan. 20, 1812.

Capt. Harris, commanding his majesty's ship Sir Francis Drake, arrived last night at Lord Liverpool's office with a dispatch, of which the following is a copy:—

Batavia, Sept. 29, 1811.

Sir,—I had the honour to acquaint you, in my dispatch of the 1st instant, that the conquest of Java was at that time substantially accomplished by the glorious and decisive victory of the 20th of August.

I am happy to announce to your excellency the realization of those views, by the actual surrender of the island and its dependencies by a capitulation concluded between their excellencies Lieut.-General Sir Samuel Auchmuty and General Jansens, on the 18th of September.

I have the honour to enclose a report which the commander-in-chief has addressed to me, of the proceedings of the army subsequent to the 26th of August, with its enclosures.

Your excellency will observe with satisfaction, from these documents, that the final pacification of the island has been hastened by fresh examples of the same spirit, decision, and judgment which have marked the measures of his excellency the commander-in-chief, and of the same gallantry which has characterised the troops since the hour of their disembarkation on this coast.

The commander-in-chief will sail in a few days for India; and I flatter myself that I shall be able to embark on board his majesty's ship Modeste, for Bengal, about the middle of October.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) MINTO.

To his Excellency R. T. Farquhar, Esq. &c. Isle of France.

Modeste, off Samarang, Sept. 21, 1811.

My Lord,—I have the honour to submit to your lordship a continuation of the report which it is my duty to lay before you, of the proceedings of the army under my command.

Immediately on receiving the intelligence of General Jansens' retreat from Bugtenzorg by an eastern route, and the occupation of that post by our troops, I placed a force, consisting of the 3d battalion of Bengal volunteers, and a detachment of artillery with two guns, under the order of Col. Wood, and directed his embarkation, in communication with Rear-Admiral Stopford, who ordered three frigates on this service, for the purpose of occupying the fort of Cheribon. Transports were at the same time put in a state of preparation for a force, con-

sisting of the detachment of the royal, and a company of Bengal artillery, a troop of his majesty's 22d dragoons, his majesty's 14th and 78th regiments of foot, the 4th battalion of Bengal volunteer Sepoys, the Madras pioneers, and a small ordnance equipment, with which it was my intention to embark, and accompanying Rear-Admiral Stopford with the squadron, for the attack of Sourabaya and Fort Louis, towards which place it was supposed the enemy had retired.

A large part of his majesty's 14th regiment, the royal artillery, and six field-pieces, were, by the kindness of Rear-Admiral Stopford, received on board his majesty's ships of war, and they, with the transports, sailed as they could be got ready for sea, with orders to rendezvous off the point of Sidayo, near the western entrance of the harbour of Sourabaya. I embarked on the 4th of September; and early in the morning on the 5th, sailed to join the troops in his majesty's ship Modeste, which the admiral, in attention to my convenience, had allotted for my accommodation.

On the 6th of September, when on the point of Indermayo, I learned from an express-boat which had been boarded by Commodore Broughton, that Cheribon was in possession of the frigates detached on that service, having separated from the transport on board of which all their troops but the commodore had embarked. Captain Beaver, the senior officer of the squadron, had landed the seamen and marines, and occupied the fort, which surrendered to his summons in time to make a prisoner of Brigadier Jamelle, while passing on his route from Bugtenzorg, with many other officers and troops. Letters intercepted on this occasion from General Jansens, announced his intention to collect his remaining force near Samarang, and to retire on Solo. This intelligence determined me to sail for Cheribon, where I arrived on the evening of the 7th of September; and finding that no troops had yet arrived, that a detachment of seamen and marines had marched inland on the Bugtenzorg road, and been successful in securing great numbers of the fugitives from thence, and gaining possession, on terms of capitulation, of the post of Carong Sambong on that route, I sent immediate orders for the march of reinforcements from the district of Batavia. The cavalry, half of the horse artillery, and the detachment of his majesty's 89th regiment from Bugtenzorg, were desired to join me at Samarang, by the route of Cheribon, and the light infantry volunteer battalion was ordered to embark at Batavia for the same place.

I obtained from Captain Beaver, of his majesty's ship Nisus, the dispatch of vessels in every direction, to meet the straggling transports on their route to Sourabaya, and direct them all to rendezvous at Samarang; addressing a letter to the Hon. Admiral Stopford, to Commodore Broughton, and all the captains of his majesty's ships, requesting them to give similar orders. I sailed the same evening in the Modeste, and, after meeting the Windham transport, and ordering her with the 3d volunteer battalion to Cheribon, directed my course to Samarang. I arrived there on the 9th, and was shortly afterwards joined by Rear-Admiral Stopford, the commodore, and a few transports, having on board a part of his majesty's 14th regiment, half the 78th, the artillery detachments, six field-pieces, and the detachment of pioneers.

To ascertain the fact of General Jansens' presence, and feel how far the capture of General Jamelle and the troops from Bugtenzorg might have changed his plan, I repeated to him on the 10th, in concert with the admiral, an invitation to surrender the island on terms of capitulation; and

Captain Elliott and Colonel Agnew were charged with the communication. They saw the general,—received his reply,—ascertained that he had still with him at least a numerous staff,—and that he professed a determination to persevere in the contest. The small force with me did not admit of my attempting to assault the place, while it was supposed to be thus occupied; but an attack was made that night by the boats of the squadron, on several gun-vessels of the enemy moored across the entrance of the rivers leading to the town end; the precipitation with which they were abandoned, gave a character of probability to accounts which reached us from fishermen and others that the general was occupied in withdrawing his troops to the interior, and had fortified a position at a short distance on the road towards Solo or Soercarta, the residence of the emperor of Java.

On the 12th of September, as no other troops had arrived, it was determined to attack the town: a summons was first sent to the commandant, and it appeared, that the enemy had (as at Batavia) evacuated the place, leaving it to be surrendered by the commander of the burghers. It was that night occupied by a detachment under Colonel Gibbs; and all the troops I could collect were landed on the following day.

It was ascertained that the enemy had retired to a strong position, about six miles distance on the Solo road, carrying with him all the chief civil, as well as military officers of the district, and that he was busied in completing batteries and intrenchments in a pass of the hills, where he had collected the residue of his regular troops, some cannon, and a force, including the auxiliary troops of the native princes, exceeding eight hundred men, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, commanded by many European officers of rank.

As any check of the attempts of our troops at this important period might have been productive of the worst effects, I thought it prudent to wait the hourly expected arrival of a larger force; but after two days passed at Samarang without their appearance, I resolved to risk an attack with the slender means at my disposal, rather than to give the enemy confidence by a longer delay, or afford them time to complete their works, which were said to be still imperfect.

For these reasons, on the evening of the 14th, I had directed preparations to be made for an attack on the following day, when intelligence arrived that the Windham had sailed for Cheribon with some troops, and several vessels were seen in the offing; I therefore countermanded the orders, in the expectation of succours; but the admiral, anxious, on account of the approaching unfavourable season, to secure a safe anchorage for the ships, sailed in the morning, with two ships of the line and three frigates, to attack Fort Louis, and, if successful, to occupy the harbour of Sourabaya.

The Windham alone arrived in the course of the night, and even the very slender reinforcement which she brought was, situated as we were, of great importance, and it enabled me to withdraw all the European garrison from the fort of Samarang, and to add a company of sepoys to the field force, which, thus strengthened, did not exceed one thousand one hundred infantry, and the necessary artillery to man four six-pounders, with some pioneers.

I did not think it proper to assume the direct command of so small a detachment; I confided it to Colonel Gibbs, of his majesty's 59th regiment, proceeding, however, with the troops, that I might be at hand to profit by any fortunate result of the attack.

Experience had warranted my reposing the fullest confidence in the valour and discipline of the troops:

had the good fortune to command, and taught me to appreciate those which the enemy could oppose to them. Many of the fugitives from Cornelius were in their ranks, and the rest of their forces were strongly impressed, by their exaggerated accounts, with the dangers to be dreaded from the impetuosity of our troops. I did not, therefore, feel apprehension of any unfortunate result from attacking the enemy with numbers so very disproportionate; but from our total want of cavalry, I did not expect to derive from it any very decisive advantage, beyond that of driving them from the position they had chosen.

The small party of cavalry, of which I had been disappointed by the absence of the transports which conveyed them, would have been invaluable; much of the enemy's force was mounted, and they had some horse artillery, while not even the horses of my staff were arrived, and our artillery and ammunition were to be moved by hand by the lascars and pioneers, who for this purpose were attached to the field-pieces.

Colonel Gibbs marched at two o'clock on the morning of the 16th from Samarang, and after ascending some steep hills, at the distance of near six miles, the fires of the enemy appeared a little before the dawn of day extending along the summit of a hill, which crossed our front at Jattee Allee, and over part of which the road was cut; the doubtful light, and great height of the hill they occupied, made the position appear at first most formidable. It was resolved to attack it immediately; and as the leading division or advance of the detachments moved forward to turn the enemy's left, a fire was opened on them from many guns placed on the summit of the hill, and various positions on its face, which completely commanded the road; these were answered by our field-pieces as they came up, with the effect, though fired from a considerable distance, and with great elevation, of confusing the enemy's artillery in directing their fire, from which a very trifling loss was sustained. Their flank was turned with little difficulty but what arose from the extreme steepness of the ascent; and after a short but ineffectual attempt to stop, by the fire of some guns advantageously posted across a deep ravine, the advance of the body of our detachment, the enemy abandoned the greatest part of their artillery, and were seen in great numbers, and in great confusion, in full retreat.

Our want of cavalry to follow the fugitives with speed, the steepness of the road, and the necessity for removing chevaux de frise with which the passage was obstructed, gave time for the escape of the enemy, while our troops, exhausted by their exertions, were recovering their breath.

It was evident that their army was completely disunited; several officers, some of them of rank, were taken; their native allies, panic-struck, had abandoned their officers, and only a few pieces of horse artillery remained of their field ordnance. With these they attempted to cover their retreat, pursued by Colonel Gibbs, who, with the detachment, passed several incomplete and abandoned batteries; and at noon, and after twelve miles march over a rugged country, approached the village of Oonarang, in which, and in the small fort beyond it, the enemy appeared to have halted, and collected in irregular masses. Small cannon from the fort and village opened on the line as it advanced. Our field-pieces were brought up to a commanding station, and by their fire covered the formation of the troops, who, led by Colonel Gibbs, were advancing to assault the fort, when it was evacuated by the enemy; alarmed by our fire, they were

seen to abandon it and its vicinity in the utmost confusion, leaving some light guns with much ammunition and provisions in the village, where they had broken the bridge to impede pursuit; the road beyond it was covered with the caps, clothing, and military equipments of their troops, who seemed to have been completely routed and dispersed.

A number of officers made prisoners confirmed this belief; our troops had however marched so far, that they were unequal to a longer pursuit, and were quartered in the fort and the barracks which the enemy had quitted.

Early in the night Brigadier Winkleman, with some other officers, came into my quarters with a flag of truce from General Jansens, who was stated to be fifteen miles in advance of my position, Solatiga, on the road to Solo; the brigadier was charged to request an armistice, that the governor-general might communicate with your lordship on terms of capitulation. He was informed by my direction, that he must treat with me, and that without delay; I, however, consented, in consideration of the distance of his position, to grant, for the express purpose of capitulation, an armistice of twenty-four hours, to commence from six o'clock on the following morning, and limited in its effect to the forces present. With this answer Brigadier Winkleman returned, accepting the armistice proposed.

I was perfectly aware of the general sentiments of Rear-Admiral Stopford, regarding the object on which our joint services were employed, from the unreserved communication I had held with him. He had sailed for Sourabaya with the declared intention of attacking Fort Louis, and of returning to his station when the service was accomplished; and he was most anxious for its speedy termination, as he had informed me, he did not think ships would be safe on the northern coasts of Java after the 4th of October, unless Sourabaya was in our possession.

All these considerations were strong in my mind against the delay of a reference to him; and confident that the important object of obtaining for Great Britain an immediate surrender of the island ought not to be impeded or delayed by any point merely of form, I did not hesitate to act individually, and on my sole responsibility, for the interests of the state. I had also cause to fear, if the favourable moment was allowed to pass, that the allies of the enemy might recover from their panic, that General Jansens might learn the small amount of our force, that he might again collect his troops and retire on Solo, where, profiting by the period of approaching rains, he might prolong the contest; and though I could not doubt its ultimate success, a war in the interior would have embarrassed our arrangements, and have involved the affairs of the colony in inextricable confusion.

On the forenoon of the 17th of September, the Commandeur de Kock, brigadier and chief of the staff of the French army on Java, arrived at Oonarang, with powers from General Jansens to treat of a capitulation, which I authorised Colonel Agnew, the adjutant-general of the forces, to discuss with him on my part: the result was the signature by them of the articles I have the honour to enclose, No. 1, with which General de Kock returned in the afternoon to obtain General Jansens' approval.

At three o'clock in the morning of the 18th, Brigadier Winkleman arrived at my quarters from General Jansens, who declined to sign the articles which had been agreed upon, adverting particularly to those which concerned the debts of the government to indivi- . He requested that I would meet the general half-way, or stated

that he would, if preferred, come to my quarters at Oonarang, for the purpose of discussion or explanation of those articles.

As the situation in which it is evident he stood deprived him of all claim to those terms of capitulation which, had he profited by the former invitations made while he still possessed the means of defence, he might perhaps have obtained, and as my situation with a force unequal to prosecute operations further in the interior would not admit of delay, I assumed a firm tone; and desiring General Winkleman to be informed that personal respect for the character of General Jansens had alone induced me to grant any terms to his army, announced to him that the armistice would cease at the appointed hour, and the troops march forward at the same time.

Colonel Agnew gave orders for this purpose in his presence; and informed him, that if General Jansens allowed the opportunity of capitulating now offered to escape, by not accepting the terms already prepared, no other could be offered. Brigadier Winkleman returned with all speed to General Jansens, and Colonel Gibbs marched with his detachments at six o'clock on the road to Soligata, where, after advancing about five miles, he was met by Brigadier Winkleman, bearing the capitulation confirmed by the signature of General Jansens, and accompanied by a letter, No. 2, which strongly marked the acuteness of his feelings at being compelled, by the desertion of his allies, and the destruction of his army, to adopt this measure.

The detachment counter-marched immediately, and after sending a company (at the request of Brigadier Winkleman) to secure the guns in the post of Soligata, moved back to Oonarang, whence on the evening I returned to Samarang, just before General Jansens had announced his intention of joining me at the former place. The general, with great part of his officers, also reached Samarang that night; I visited him on the following day, and arranged for the equipment of a transport to convey him to Batavia with his suite, on which they embarked this morning.

I have dispatched Colonel Gibbs to assume the command of the division of Sourabaya, to which I have allotted his majesty's 78th regiment, the 4th volunteer battalion, the light infantry battalion, and the royal artillery; I have sent a small detachment under Major Yule, of the 20th Bengal regiment, an officer on whose conduct I have much reliance, to accompany the Prince of Samanap and his force to the island of Madura, where I have directed the major to assume command, subject to the general control of Colonel Gibbs; he has been instructed to occupy the small forts of Joanna and Rambang on his route, and I have directed that of Japara to be occupied from Samarang. Idiamayo and Pacalonga have been garrisoned by troops from Cheribon. In mentioning the Prince of Samanap, it would be unjust to him not to report, that, prior to my march from Samarang, to attack the enemy, he sent to ask my orders, being, with two thousand of his people, within a short distance at Damak. He visited me on my return to Samarang, and expressed an earnest wish for the protection and friendship of the British nation.

As Colonel Wood requested permission to relinquish the command of Samarang, and return to Bengal, I appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Watson, of his majesty's 14th regiment, to relieve him in the command. The 14th regiment, a small detachment of artillery, and part of the 3d volunteer battalion, have been stationed at Samarang, and will shortly, I trust, be reinforced by the arrival of the detach-

ments of the horse-artillery, cavalry, and 89th regiment.

I have detached Captain Robinson, your lordship's aid de-camp, with a small escort, to the courts of Solo and D'Jogocarta, to deliver a letter from me to the emperor and sultan, and announce the change that has taken place; I have also called upon the residents at their courts, Van Braam and Englehard, to continue, agreeably to the capitulation, the exercise of their functions in behalf of the British government, and to secure carefully the public property of the late government, placed in the territories of the respective princes at whose court they reside.

I have also required the other public functionaries of the late government to continue in the temporary exercise of their functions, which hitherto I have found no instance of their declining to perform.

It will be necessary soon to arrange for the guard of honour attached to the emperor and sultan of the troops of the European government of Java, and for the occupation of the forts at their capital, and on the lines of communication to and between these: but this will be easily arranged when the troops ordered to Samarang shall have arrived, and the report of Captain Robinson shall have warranted a judgment of the strength of these detachments.

I embarked this morning in his majesty's ship Modeste for Batavia, and shall have the honour of receiving your lordship's personal commands, and discussing with you the several military arrangements which it may be necessary to make for the security of the island of Java and its dependencies, previous to my return to Madras, which it is my wish to do without delay.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) S. AUCHMUTY,
Lieut.-Gen.

To the Right Hon. Lord Minto,
Governor-General, &c.

The articles of capitulation follow, with various official returns, and the proceedings of the naval force under Rear Admiral Stopford.

DEFENCE OF TARIFFA.—*London Gazette, Jan. 25.*

Tariffa, Dec. 24.

Sir,—I have the honour to report, that, on the 20th instant, the enemy invested this town with from 4 to 5,000 infantry, and from 2 to 300 cavalry. As it was not advisable to fight so superior a force, I resisted him for an hour with the cavalry and infantry, Spanish and British piquets of the garrison, reinforced by a company of the 95th, and two six-pounder field-guns of Captain Hughes's brigade. The loss of the enemy was considerable. On the 21st, Captain Wren, of the 11th, destroyed, with his company, a small piquet of the enemy. The 22d, I made a sortie at the request of General Copons, and in conjunction with his troops, with the intention to ascertain the numbers of the enemy, by inducing him to shew his columns. His light troops suffered considerably from our shells. The enemy is now making his approaches at a long musket-shot from the town; but the ground so completely commands us, and is so favourable to him, that our small guns have little or no effect upon him. I have, &c.

(Signed) J. B. SKERRETT,
Colonel.

To Major-General Cooke, &c.

Tariffa, Dec. 30.

Sir,—In my last I had the honour to state, that the enemy had invested this town on the 20th instant; since which period he has rapidly carried on a regular parallel and approach against the wall of the town, which I consider as doing much honour to the garrison. I have several times found it necessary

to drive back the enemy's advance, and to interrupt his works, in which we have met with a slight loss; and the enemy, from being exposed to the fire of the few small guns we possess on the towers, has suffered considerably It was only on these occasions that we materially annoyed the enemy: for the wall of the town is so completely commanded, that, in a few hours' work, he has every where much better cover than ourselves. The enemy yesterday opened his fire at half-past ten, and continued to batter in breach at a distance of about 300 yards, with four French 16-pounders on the east wall, near the Retiro gate, and four howitzers and other smaller pieces playing on the island and causeway. He continued a constant fire until night, the first and each shot passing through the wall, and through some houses in the rear of it. Before night a practicable breach was effected. He this day continued to widen the breach, and, I imagine, will not attempt the assault until it is extended to the tower on each flank (a space of about forty yards). I have traversed the streets, and have taken the only measure by which there is a chance of preserving the place—that of defending the houses. The enemy's force employed in the siege is stated at 10,000; probably this is in some degree exaggerated. A constant fire of musketry is interchanged. I have particularly to regret the loss of the service of Lieutenant Guanter, deputy-assistant quarter-master-general, a very intelligent and brave officer, who is severely wounded. Enclosed is a return of killed and wounded since my last.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) J. H. Skerrett,
Colonel.

London Gazette Extraordinary.

Downing Street, Jan. 28.

Captain O'Donoghue, acting aid-de-camp to Colonel Skerrett, has arrived this morning at Lord Liverpool's office, with dispatches from Major-General Cooke, of which the following are copies:

My Lord, I beg leave to congratulate your lordship upon the complete failure of the enemy's expedition against Tariffa, and refer you to the enclosed copy of my letter to General Lord Wellington, conveying Colonel Skerrett's reports of the French having been repulsed with great loss in assaulting the breach which they had effected in the wall, and of their having retreated on the night of the 4th, leaving their heavy artillery and a quantity of stores on the ground.

Your lordship will see that Colonel Skerrett, and the brave troops under his command, have thoroughly done their duty. He has expressed his sense of the effectual co-operation of the Spanish troops under General Copons, who, in his report, gives his full approbation of the conduct of Colonel Skerrett, and the British troops under his orders, upon this, as he has done upon former occasions during the last three months.

Captain O'Donoghue, of the 47th regiment, acting aid-de-camp to Colonel Skerrett, has charge of this dispatch, and will give your lordship any details relative to the late events at Tariffa.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) G. Cooke,
Major-General.
The Earl of Liverpool, &c.

Cadiz, Jan. 10.

My Lord,—I last night received a dispatch from Colonel Skerrett, dated the 1st instant, of which I have the

honour to transmit a copy, reporting the defeat of a strong column of the enemy on the day before, in an assault of the breach which they had made in the wall of Tariffa. I received at the same time intelligence from Lieutenant-General Campbell, that the French had broke up from before the place on the night of the 4th, leaving their artillery, &c. and retiring by a pass of La Pena, under the fire of the navy. I have this morning received Colonel Skerret's report of that most satisfactory event by his aid-de-camp, Captain O'Donoghue, and I beg leave to refer your lordship to copies of them.

I have, &c.

George Cooke, Maj.-Gen.

Gen. Lord Visc. Wellington, &c.

Tariffa, Jan. 1.

Sir,—In my last I had the honour to state, that the enemy commenced to batter in breach on the 29th of December; since which period, until yesterday, he kept up a heavy fire of cannon on the breach, and of shells on the town, causeway, and island. At eight o'clock on the morning of the 31st Dec. a strong column was seen rapidly advancing to the breach; our musketry several times checked the enemy; and the firm front and intrepid behaviour of the troops, in less than an hour, gained a complete victory. The most bold of the enemy fell near the foot of the breach, and the mass of the column made a precipitate retreat.

The situation of the enemy's wounded, with which the ground was covered between his battery and our fire, where they must inevitably have perished, induced me, from motives of compassion, to hoist a flag of truce to carry them off. Some were brought into the place over the breach; but from the extreme difficulty attending this I allowed the enemy to carry the remainder away. General Laval, the French commander-in-chief, expressed his acknowledgments for the conduct of the British and Spanish nations on this occasion, in the most feeling and grateful terms. We have made prisoners, ten officers, and twenty or thirty soldiers; the enemy's loss has been very severe. The column that attacked the breach was two thousand men, composed of all the grenadiers and voltigeurs of the army. The enemy invested this town on the 20th of December, since which period, one thousand British and seven or eight hundred Spanish troops, with only a defence of a wall, which appears to have been built as a defence against archery, and before the use of gunpowder, have resisted an army of ten thousand men, with a regular battering train of artillery, and have at last defeated and repulsed them. The wall of the town has the additional disadvantage of being commanded within half musket-shot, and flanked or taken in reverse in almost every part.

The conduct of all the troops has been admirable, and that of Lieutenant-Colonel Gough, and the 2d battalion of the 87th regiment, exceeds all praise. Equal credit is due to the indefatigable exertions of Captain Smith's royal engineers, to whom much of our success is due. I have on all occasions received the greatest assistance from the military experience and the great exertions of Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Proby, second in command.

We have to regret the loss of two officers killed: Lieutenant Longley, royal engineers, and Lieutenant Hall, 47th regiment. I have &c.

(Signed) J. B. Skerrett, Colonel.

To Major-General Cooke, &c. &c.

Return of killed, wounded, and missing in the action at Tariffa on the 31st of December, 1811.

Royal Engineers—1 lieutenant killed.

2d Battalion 47th regiment—1 lieutenant, 1 rank and file, killed; 1 lieutenant, 2 rank and file, wounded.

2d battalion 87th regiment—5 rank and file killed; 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 21 rank and file, wounded.

2d battalion 95th regiment—1 rank and file killed; 1 rank and file wounded.

Total—2 officers, 7 rank and file, killed; 3 officers, 24 rank and file, wounded.

Names of officers killed and wounded.

Royal Engineers.——Lieutenant Longley, killed.

2d Battalion 47th regiment—Lieutenant Hall, killed; Lieutenant Hill, slightly wounded.

2d battalion 87th regiment—Lieutenant M. Carroll and Ensign Waller, slightly wounded.

(Signed) T. BUNBURY, Brigade-Major.

Tariffa, Jan. 5.

Sir,—In my letter of the 1st instant, I had the honour to relate the particulars of our proceedings here, and of our victory at the breach. Since that period the enemy has kept up a partial fire, and the breach was yesterday completely open for the space of 25 or 30 yards.

From the movements of the enemy last night, I was induced to suppose he intended another assault, and the garrison waited in eager expectation to give him another proof of British valour. To our astonishment, this morning at daylight, the columns of the enemy were already at a distance, having taken advantage of a dark and stormy night to make a precipitate retreat, leaving in our possession all his artillery, ammunition, stores, &c. &c. I immediately ordered Major Brand, with a part of the 47th regiment, to follow the enemy; he took possession of his artillery, waggons, and a quantity of stores, time enough to save them from the flames, the enemy having set fire to them. We have made some prisoners. From the number of dead found upon the ground the enemy occupied, his loss on the whole must have been very great. Marshal Victor was present in the French camp, to give orders for the retreat.

We have thus seen the greatest effort the French are capable of making frustrated by eighteen hundred British and Spanish troops, with only the defence of a paltry wall; and an army of ten thousand men, commanded by a marshal of France, retreating from them silently in the night, after having been repulsed and defeated, leaving behind all their artillery and stores, collected at a great expence, and by immense exertions.

I enclose a return of artillery and stores taken from the enemy. The unremitting vigilance and exertion, the zeal and intrepidity, of every individual of this garrison is above praise.

I have the honour to dispatch this by my acting aid-de-camp, Captain O'Donoghue, of the 47th regiment, who is in possession of every information relative to my proceedings at this place, an officer of great merit and considerable length of service.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) J. B. SKERRETT, Colonel.

SIEGE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.—*London Gazette Extraordinary.*

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 1812.

Downing-Street, Feb. 4.

Major the Honourable A. Gordon has arrived this evening at Lord Liverpool's office with a dispatch, addressed to his lordship by General Viscount Wellington, dated Gallegos, Jan. 20, 1812.

My Lord,—I informed your lordship in my dispatch of the 9th, that I had attacked Ciudad Rodrigo, and in that of the 15th, of the progress of the operations to that period; and I have now the pleasure to acquaint your lordship, that we took the place by storm yesterday evening after dark.

We continued from the 15th to the 19th to complete the second parallel, and the communications with that work; and we had made some progress by sap towards the crest of the glacis. On the night of the 15th, we likewise advanced from the left of the first parallel down the slope of the hill, towards the convent of St Francisco, to a situation from which the walls of the Fausse Braye and of the town were seen, on which a battery of seven guns was constructed, and they commenced their fire on the morning of the 18th.

In the mean time, the batteries in the parallel continued their fire; and yesterday evening their fire had not only considerably injured the defences of the place, but had made breaches in the Fausse Braye wall, and in the body of the place, which were considered practicable; while the battery on the slope of the hill, which had been commenced on the night of the 15th, and had opened on the 18th, had been equally efficient still further to the left, and opposite to the suburb of St Francisco.

I therefore determined to storm the place, notwithstanding that the approaches had not been brought to the crest of the glacis, and the counterscarp of the ditch was still entire. The attack was accordingly made yesterday evening in five separate columns, consisting of the troops of the third and light divisions, and of Brigadier General Pack's brigade. The two light columns, conducted by Lieutenant Colonel O'Toole, of the 2d Caçadores, and Major Ridge, of the 5th regiment, were destined to protect the advance of Major-General M'Kinnon's brigade, forming the third, to the top of the breach in the Fausse Braye wall; and all these, being composed of troops of the third division, were under the direction of Lieutenant-General Picton.

The fourth column, consisting of the 43d and 52d regiments, and part of the 95th regiment, being of the light division under the direction of Major-General Craufurd, attacked the breaches on the left, in front of the suburb of St Francisco, and covered the left of the attack of the principal breach by the troops of the third division; and Brigadier-General Pack was destined with his brigade, forming the fifth column, to make a false attack upon the southern face of the fort. Besides these five columns, the 94th regiment, belonging to the third division, descended into the ditch into two columns on the right of Major-General M'Kinnon's brigade, with a view to protect the descent of that body into the ditch, and its attack of the breach in the Fausse Braye, against the obstacles which it was supposed the enemy would construct to oppose their progress.

All these attacks succeeded; and Brigadier General Pack even surpassed my expectations, having converted his false attack into a real one, and his advanced guard, under the command of Major Lynch, having followed the enemy's troops from the advanced works into the Fausse Braye, where they made prisoners of all opposed to them.

Major Ridge, of the 2d battalion of the 5th regiment, having escaladed the Fausse Braye wall, stormed the principal breach in the body of the place, together with the 94th regiment, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, which had moved along the ditch at the same time, and stormed the

breach in the Fausse Braye, both in front of Major-General M'Kinnon's brigade. Thus these regiments not only effectually covered the advance from the trenches of Major-General M'Kinnon's brigade by their first movements and operations, but they preceded them in the attack.

Major-General Craufurd, and Major-General Vandeleur, and the troops of the light division on the left, were likewise very forward on that side; and in less than half an hour from the time the attack commenced, our troops were in possession of, and formed on the ramparts of the place, each body contiguous to the other. The enemy then submitted, having sustained a considerable loss in the contest.

Our loss was also, I am concerned to add, severe, particularly in officers of high rank and estimation in this army. Major-General M'Kinnon was unfortunately blown up by the accidental explosion of one of the enemy's expense magazines, close to the breach, after he had gallantly and successfully led the troops under his command to the attack. Major-General Craufurd likewise received a severe wound while he was leading on the light division to the storm, and I am apprehensive that I shall be deprived for some time of his assistance. Major-General Vandeleur was likewise wounded in the same manner, but not so severely, and he was able to continue in the field. I have to add to this list, Lieutenant-Colonel Colbourne, of the 53d regiment, and Major George Napier, who led the storming party of the light division, and was wounded on the top of the breach.

I have great pleasure in reporting to your lordship the uniform good conduct, spirit of enterprize, and patience and perseverance in the performance of great labour, by which the general officers, officers, and troops of the 1st, 3d, 4th, and light divisions, and Brigadier-General Pack's brigade, by whom the siege was carried on, have been distinguished during the late operations. Lieutenant-General Graham assisted me in superintending the conduct of the details of the siege, besides performing the duties of the general officer commanding the first division; and I am much indebted to the suggestions and assistance I received from him for the success of this enterprize.

The conduct of all parts of the third division, in the operations which they performed with so much gallantry and exactness on the evening of the 19th, in the dark, afford the strongest proof of the abilities of Lieutenant-General Picton and Major-General M'Kinnon, by whom they were directed and led; but I beg particularly to draw your lordship's attention to the conduct of Lieutenant Colonel O'Toole of the 2d Cacadores, of Major Ridge of the 2d battalion 5th foot, of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell of the 94th regiment, of Major Manners of the 74th, and of Major Grey of the 2d battalion 5th foot, who has been twice wounded during this siege.

It is but justice also to the 3d division to report, that the men who performed the sap belonged to the 45th, 74th, and 88th regiments, under the command of Captain M'Leod of the royal engineers, and Captain Thompson of the 74th, Lieutenant Beresford of the 88th, and Lieutenant Metcalf of the 45th, and they distinguished themselves not less in the storm of the place, than they had in the performance of their laborious duty during the siege.

I have already reported in my letter of the 9th instant, my sense of the conduct of Major-General Craufurd, and of Lieutenant-Colonel Colbourne, and of the troops of the light division, in the storm of the redoubt of St Francisco, on the evening of the 8th,

instant. The conduct of these troops was equally distinguished throughout the siege, and in the storm nothing could exceed the gallantry with which these brave officers and troops advanced and accomplished the difficult operation allotted to them, notwithstanding that all their leaders had fallen.

I particularly request your lordship's attention to the conduct of Major-General Craufurd, Major-General Vandeleur, Lieutenant-Colonel Barnard of the 95th, Lieutenant-Colonel Colbourne, Major Gibbs, and Major Napier of the 52d, and Lieutenant-Colonel M'Leod of the 43d. The conduct of Captain Duffy of the 43d, and that of Lieutenant Gorwood of the 52d regiment, who was wounded, have likewise been particularly reported to me; Lieutenant-Colonel Elder, and the 3d Cacadores, were likewise distinguished upon this occasion.

The 1st Portuguese regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hill, and the 16th, under Colonel Campbell, being Brigadier-Gen. Pack's brigade, were likewise distinguished in the storm, under the command of the Brigadier-General, who particularly mentions Major Lynch.

In my dispatch of the 15th, I reported to your lordship the attack of the convent of Santa Cruz, by the troops of the 1st division, under the direction of Lieut.-General Graham, and that of the convent of St Francisco, on the 14th instant, under the direction of Major-General the honourable C. Colville. The first-mentioned enterprize was performed by Captain Laroche de Stackenfels, of the 1st line battalion of the King's German legion; the last by Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt, with the 40th regiment. This regiment remained from that time in the suburb of St Francisco, and materially assisted our attack on that side of the place.

Although it did not fall to the lot of the troops of the 1st and 4th divisions to bring these operations to their successful close, they distinguished themselves throughout their progress, by the patience and perseverance with which they performed the labours of the siege. The brigade of guards, under Major Gen. H. Campbell, was particularly distinguished in this respect.

I likewise request your lordship's attention to the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, the chief engineer, and of Brigade-Major Jones, and the officers and men of the royal engineers. The ability with which these operations were carried on exceeds all praise; and I beg leave to recommend those officers to your lordship most particularly.

Major Dickson, of the royal artillery, attached to the Portuguese artillery, has for some time had the direction of the heavy train attached to this army, and has conducted the intricate details of the late operation, as he did those of the late sieges of Badajoz, in the last summer, much to my satisfaction. The rapid execution produced by the well-directed fire kept up from our batteries, affords the best proof of the merits of the officers and men of the royal artillery, and of the Portuguese artillery, employed on this occasion. But I must particularly mention Brigade-Major May, and Captains Holcombe, Power, Dynely, and Dundas, of the royal artillery; and Captains Da Cunha and Da Corta, and Lieutenant Silva of the 1st regiment of Portuguese artillery.

I have likewise particularly to report to your lordship the conduct of Major Sturgeon, of the royal staff corps. He constructed and placed for us the bridge over the Agueda, without which the enterprise could not have been attempted; and he afterwards materially assisted Lieutenant-General Graham and myself, in

our reconnoissance of the place, on which the plan of the attack was founded; and he finally conducted the 2d battalion 5th regiment, as well as the 2d caçadores, to their points of attack.

The adjutant-general, and the deputy quarter-master-general, and the officers of their several departments, gave me every assistance throughout this service, as well as those of my personal staff; and I have great pleasure in adding, that, notwithstanding the season of the year, and the increased difficulties of procuring supplies for the troops, the whole army have been well supplied, and every branch of the service provided for during the late operations, by the indefatigable exertions of Mr Commissary-general Bisset, and the officers belonging to his department.

The Marshal del Campo, Don Carlos d'Espana, and Don Julian Sanchez, observed the enemy's movements beyond the Tormes, during the operations of the siege; and I am much obliged to them, and to the people of Castile in general, for the assistance I received from them. The latter have invariably shewn their detestation of the French tyranny, and their desire to contribute by every means in their power to remove it.

I will hereafter transmit to your lordship a detailed account of what we have found in the place; but I believe there are 153 pieces of ordnance, including the heavy train belonging to the French army, and great quantities of ammunition and stores. We have the governor, General Banier, about seventy-eight officers, and one thousand seven hundred men, prisoners.

I transmit this dispatch by my aid-de-camp, the honourable Major Gordon, who will give your lordship any further details you may require; and I beg leave to recommend him to your protection.

I have the honour to be, &c.

WELLINGTON.

I enclose a return of the prisoners, and of the ordnance which has been taken on this occasion. I have not yet been able to collect the returns of the killed and wounded; I therefore transmit a list containing the names of those who have fallen according to the best information I could obtain, and I will forward the returns to your lordship as soon as possible.

Gallegos, January 22.

My Lord,—I have the honour to enclose the returns of the killed and wounded of the troops engaged in the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, which it was not in my power to transmit to your lordship in my dispatch of the 26th instant. I have the honour to be, &c.

WELLINGTON.

Return of killed, wounded, and missing, of the army under the command of his Excellency General Viscount Wellington, K B. at Ciudad Rodrigo, between the 15th and the 19th days of January, 1812.

Total British loss between the 15th and 19th of January, 1812.—1 general staff, 5 captains, 2 lieutenants, 8 serjeants, 1 drummer, 113 rank and file, killed;—3 general staff, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 2 majors, 19 captains, 28 lieutenants, 5 ensigns, 2 staff, 28 serjeants, 5 drummers, 403 rank and file, wounded; 5 rank and file missing.

Total Portuguese loss,—1 serjeant, 18 rank and file, killed;—1 captain, 3 lieutenants, 1 serjeant, 91 rank and file, wounded;—2 rank and file missing.

General total,—1 general staff, 5 captains, 2 lieutenants, 9 serjeants, 1 drummer, 131 rank and file, killed;—3 general staff, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 2

majors, 20 captains, 31 lieutenants, 5 ensigns, 2 staff, 29 serjeants, 5 drummers, 494 rank and file, wounded;—7 rank and file, missing.

C. STEWART,
Maj.-Gen. and Adj.-Gen.

ACTIONS AT SEA.

London Gazette, March 28.

Dispatches have been received from Sir E. Pellew, with the following inclosures:—

His Majesty's ship Alceste, off Lissa, Dec. 11, 1811.

His majesty's ships under my orders having been driven from their anchorage before Lugina, by strong gales, had taken shelter in Lissa; when the telegraph on Whitby Hill signalized three suspicious sail south; Alceste, Active, and Unité, were warped out of Port St George, the moment a strong E.N.E. wind would permit; and on the evening of the 28th ult. off the south end of Lissa, I met with Lieutenant M'Dougall, of his majesty's ship Unité, who, with a judgment and zeal which does him infinite credit, had put back, when on his voyage to Malta in a neutral, to acquaint me he had seen three French frigates, 40 miles to the southward. Every sail was carried on in chace, and at nine in the morning of the 29th the enemy were seen off the island of Augusta: he formed in line upon the larboard tack, and stood towards us for a short time; but finding his majesty's ships bearing upon him under all sail in close line abreast, he bore up to the N.W. and set steering sails. At eleven the rear ship separated, and stood to the N.E.; I immediately detached the Unité after her, (and Captain Chamberlayne's report to me of the result I have the honour to enclose). At 20 minutes after one P. M. the Alceste commenced action with the other two, by engaging the rear in passing to get at the commodore, but an unlucky shot soon afterwards bringing down our maintop-mast, we unavoidably dropped a little astern; cheers of 'Vive l'Empereur' resounded from both ships, they thought the day their own, not aware of what a second I had in my gallant friend Capt. Gordon, who pushed the Active up under every sail, and brought the sternmost to action, within pistol-shot; the headmost then shortened sail, tacked, and stood for the Alceste, (which, though disabled in her masts, I trust he experienced was by no means so at her guns), and after a warm conflict of two hours and twenty minutes, it ended by the French commodore making sail to the westward, which, from my crippled state, I was unable to prevent, and the other surrendering after being totally dismasted and five feet water in the hold; she proved to be the Pomone, of 44 guns, and three hundred and twenty-two men, commanded by Captain Rosamel, who fought his ship with a skill and bravery that have obtained for him the respect and esteem of his opponents: the other was the Pauline, of similar force, commanded by Monsieur Monford, Capitaine de Vaisseau, with a broad pendant; they were from Corfu, going to join the squadron at Trieste. The Alceste had 20 killed and wounded, Active 32, and Pomone 50; and it is with poignant regret I inform you that Captain Gordon has lost a leg: but, thank God, he is doing well; his merits as an officer I need not dwell upon, they are known to his country; and he lives in the hearts of all who have the happiness to know him. His first lieutenant, Dashwood, lost his arm soon after he was wounded, and the ship was fought by Lieutenant Haye in a manner that reflects the highest honour upon him; his services before had frequently merited and obtained

the high approbation and strong recommendation of his captain, who also speaks in the warmest praise of acting Lieutenant Moriarty, Mr Lothian, master, Lieut. Meers, royal marines, and every officer, seaman, and marine under his command And though our success was not so complete as I trust it would have been, could the Alceste have taken up her intended position alongside Pauline, instead of that ship, from the fall of our top mast, being enabled to manœuvre and chuse her distance, I feel it my duty to state, that every officer and man here behaved most gallantly. I was most ably assisted on the quarter deck by my first lieutenant, A. Wilson, and Mr H. Moore, master; and the main-deck guns were admirably directed by Lieutenant James Montague and Mr James Adair, acting in the place of Lieutenant Hickman, at Lissa, with the gunboats. In justice to two very deserving officers, (Lieut. Miller, royal marines, Active, and Lieut. Lloyd, royal marines, Alceste), it is necessary to mention they were ashore with most of their respective parties at Camesa Castle and Hoste's Islands, for the defence of Lissa, hourly threatened with an attack from the enemy, assembled in great force at Scisina. The Kingfisher hove in sight, and joined soon after the action; and Capt. Tritton rendered essential service by taking the prize in tow. Captain Bligh, of the Acorn, to whom I have entrusted the defence of Lissa in our absence, has had an arduous duty to perform; but no difficulties arise, when all are actuated by zeal for his majesty's service; and the little squadron you have done me the honour to entrust me with, possess it in an eminent degree. Unité has just joined, after seeing the Persanne into Lissa; and Captain Chamberlayne, with his usual alacrity, has repaired his damage, and made the signal of being fit for service; and I am happy to say, this ship will in a few hours more be perfectly so also. I intend sending the Active with prizes and prisoners to Malta as soon as possible, which, from the state of her wounded officers and men, I am sure will meet your approbation. Inclosed are lists of the killed and wounded, and I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) MURRAY MAXWELL.

To Capt. Rowley, &c.

His Majesty's ship Unité,
Nov. 29, 1811.

Sir,—I am to acquaint you, that in obedience to your signal to chase this morning, I was enabled, by the superior sailing of his majesty's ship under my command, to so far close immediately in the wake of the enemy's frigate at noon, as to exchange bow and stern chasers, but the very variable state of the weather from that time, the wind veering from the south to the east, and our opponent keeping directly astern, prevented my getting closer until near four o'clock, when, part of our broadside being fired at him, he returned his, and struck his colours. You will judge my astonishment at her proving to be La Persanne, of 860 tons, 26 9-pounders, and a complement of 125 men and 65 troops, having on board 120 iron and a few brass ordnance: she was commanded by Mons. Joseph Endie Stotie, capitainne de frigate, whose masterly manœuvres and persevering resistance for near four hours, reflect great credit on him. Our masts, yards, sails, and rigging, bear ample testimony to his galling fire. We have only one man wounded: the enemy two killed, and four wounded.

The coolness and steady attention to my orders on the part of my first lieutenant, Mr W. Crabb, Lieutenant M'Dougall, Lieutenant Hotham, Mr Gibson, lately promoted for his gallantry on board the Active, and the whole of the other officers and ship's

company, could be only equalled by their extreme disappointment at discovering, at the enemy's surrender, we had been opposed to a vessel of inferior force. I enclose a list of our defects, and the name of the wounded man— (Thomas Tate, ordinary, severely)—I remain, &c.

(Signed)

E. H. Chamberlayne, Capt.

M. Maxwell, Captain of His Majesty's ship Alceste, and senior officer, &c.

List of the enemy's squadron engaged by his Majesty's ships Alceste, Active, and Unitè, off Lissa, on the 29th of November, 1811.

La Pauline, M. Montfort, Captain, of 44 guns, 322 men, and 1100 tons; escaped.

La Pomone, C. Rosamel, Captain, of 44 guns, 322 men, and 1100 tons, taken. Has in her hold 42 iron and 9 brass guns, and 220 iron wheels for gun carriages.

La Persanne, M. Stotie, of 26 guns, 190 men, and 860 tons, taken. Is a store ship of 26 nine-pound guns (new) has about 130 iron and some brass guns in her hold.

(Signed)

Murray Maxwell, Capt.

Admiralty Office, March 31.

Copy of a letter to Rear-Admiral Foley, commander-in-chief in the Downs:—

His Majesty's sloop, Rosario, off Dieppe, March 27.

Sir,—It is with much satisfaction I have to acquaint you, that at half past eight, a. m. Dieppe bearing S. W. four or five miles, we observed an enemy's flotilla, consisting of twelve brigs and one lugger, standing along shore; and immediately made sail to cut off the leeward-most. The enemy, by signal from their commodore, formed into a line, and engaged us severally as we passed; but upon luffing up to cut off the sternmost, the whole bore up to support her, and endeavour to close with us. Finding them thus determined to support each other, and the small force of the Rosario not admitting my running the risk of being laid on board by several at once, I bore up to a brig we observed in the offing (and which proved to be the Griffon) and made the signal for an enemy. The moment she had answered, we hauled to the wind, and at forty minutes after twelve, began to harass the enemy's rear, who were then endeavouring to get into Dieppe under all sail; tacked and wore occasionally to close, receiving and returning the fire of the whole line each time; at half-past one, being far enough to windward, run into the body of the enemy, and by cutting away the running rigging of the two nearest, drove them on board each other, backed the maintopsail, and engaged them within musket shot till they were clear; then stood on and engaged another, whose mainmast and foretop-mast soon went by the board, when she immediately anchored; passed her, and drove the next in the line on shore: two more of their line yet remained to leeward: bore up, and ran the nearest one on board (then not more than three quarters of a mile from the shore). So far the Rosario had acted alone, as the Griffon had not yet arrived within gun-shot: bore away with prize beyond range of the batteries, and hailed the Griffon (then passing under a press of sail), to chase the remaining brig, and which service she performed in a very handsome manner, by running her on shore near St Aubin, under a very heavy fire from the shore: seeing no probability of the Griffon being able to destroy the brig, made her signal to attack the enemy in the S. E.,

then anchoring close in shore. In the mean time we were getting the prisoners on board, and repairing the running rigging, which was much damaged. Captain Trollope having closed with the enemy, run the Griffon in shore of one at anchor nearly in the centre, and in the most gallant manner laid her on board, cut her cables, and stood out, under the fire of the batteries, and the whole of the other brigs: upon passing the Griffon, I found her too much disabled to immediately make sail again to the attack, but being determined to have another, (and although we had nearly as many prisoners as our own sloop's company,) I run the dismasted one on board, which we found the enemy had deserted, but this circumstance the darkness of the night prevented our being enabled previously to discover, at which time the remaining seven of the flotilla were under weigh, getting into Dieppe harbour. I must beg leave to mention the very able assistance I received from the exertions of my first lieutenant, Mr James Shaw, in boarding the enemy, and during the whole of the day in the arduous task of working the ship while engaging; and the conduct of the whole of the other officers and ship's company was such as to merit my warmest approbation. We have only one petty officer and four men wounded; the officer is Mr Jonathan Widdicome Dyer, midshipman, whose unremitted exertions during the action, and activity in boarding, (when he received the wound), together with his general good conduct, renders it my duty to recommend him.

The flotilla is the fourteenth division, commanded by Monsieur Sarue, capitaine de vaisseau, and commandant de division; sailed from Boulogne at ten p. m. the 26th instant, and intended going to Cherbourg: each brig has three long brass twenty-four pounders, and an 8-inch brass howitzer, with a complement of fifty men. When I consider this flotilla, united to batteries keeping up a conssant fire of both shot and shells, and the very small force we had, I trust the having taken the run two on shore, and much damaged the others, will shew our zeal for the public service, and meet your approbation. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. Harvey, Commander.

Rear-Admiral Foley, &c.

Siege of Badajoz.

London Gazette Extraordinary.

Downing-Street, April 24.

Captain Canning, aid-de-camp to General the Earl of Wellington, arrived last night at this office, bringing dispatches, addressed by his lordship to the Earl of Liverpool, of which the following are extracts or copies.

Extract of a Dispatch from the Earl of Wellington, dated Camp before Badajoz, April 3.

We opened our fire on the 31st of March from 26 pieces of cannon, in the second parallel, to breach the face of the bastion at the south-east angle of the fort called La Trinidad; and the flank of the bastion by which the face is defended called Santa Maria. The fire upon these has continued since with great effect.

The enemy made a sortie on the night of the 29th, upon the troops of General Hamilton's division, which invest the place on the right of the Guadiana, but were immediately driven in with loss. We lost no men on this occasion.

The movements of Lieutenant-General Sir T. Graham and of Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, have obliged the enemy to retire by the dif-

ferent roads towards Cordova, with the exception of a small body of infantry and cavalry, which remained at Zalamea de la Serena, in front of Belalca-

Marshal Soult broke up in front of Cadiz on the 23d and 24th, and has marched upon Seville with all the troops which were there, with the exception of four thousand men.

I understand that he was to march from Seville again on the 30th or 31st.

I have not heard from Castile since the 30th ultimo. One division of the army of Portugal, which had been in the province of Avila, had on that day arrived at Guadapero, within two leagues of Ciudad Rodrigo; and it was supposed that Marshal Marmont was on his march with other troops from the side of Salamanca.

The river Agueda was not fordable for troops on the 30th.

Copy of a Dispatch from the Earl of Wellington, dated Camp before Badajoz, April 7.

My Lord,—My dispatch of the 3d instant will have apprised your lordship of the state of the operations against Badajoz to that date, which were brought to a close on the night of the 6th, by the capture of the place by storm.

The fire continued during the 4th and 5th against the face of the bastion of La Trinidad, and the flank of the bastion of Santa Maria; and on the 4th, in the morning, we opened another battery of six guns, in the second parallel, against the shoulder of the ravelin of St Roque, and the wall in its gorge.

Practicable breaches were effected in the bastions above-mentioned, in the evening of the 5th; but as I had observed that the enemy had entrenched the bastion of La Trinidad, and the most formidable preparations were making for the defence as well of the breach in that bastion, as of that in the bastion of Santa Maria, I determined to delay the attack for another day, and to turn all the guns in the batteries in the second parallel on the curtain of La Trinidad, in hopes that by effecting a third breach, the troops would be enabled to turn the enemy's works for the defence of the other two, the attack of which would besides be connected by the troops destined to attack the breach in the curtain.

This breach was effected in the evening of the 6th, and the fire of the face of the bastion of Santa Maria and of the flank of the bastion of La Trinidad being overcome, I determined to attack the place that night.

I had kept in reserve, in the neighbourhood of this camp, the 5th division, under Lieutenant-General Leith, which had left Castile only in the middle of March, and had but lately arrived in this part of the country, and I brought them up on that evening.

The plan for the attack was, that Lieutenant-General Picton should attack the castle at Badajoz by escalade with the 3d division; and a detachment from the guard in the trenches, furnished that evening by the 4th division, under Major Wilson of the 48th regiment, should attack the ravelin of St Roque upon his left; while the 4th division, under the Hon. Major-General Colville, and the light division under Lieutenant-Colonel Bernard, should attack the breaches in the bastions of La Trinidad and of Santa Maria, and in the curtain by which they are connected. The 5th division were to occupy the ground which the 4th and light divisions had occupied during the siege, and Lieutenant-General Leith was to make a false attack upon the outwork called Pardeleras, and another on the works of the fort towards the Guadiana, with the left brigade of

the division, under Major General Walker, which he was to turn into a real attack, if circumstances should prove favourable: and Brigadier-General Power, who invested the place with his Portugueze brigade on the right of the Guadiana, was directed to make false attacks on the tete-du-pont, the fort St Christoval, and the new redoubt called Mon cœur

The attack was accordingly made at ten at night, Lieutenant-General Picton preceding, by a few minutes, the attack by the remainder of the troops

Major-General Kempt led this attack, which went out from the right of the first parallel; he was unfortunately wounded in crossing the river Rivellas below the inundation; but notwithstanding this circumstance, and the obstinate resistance of the enemy, the castle was carried by escalade, and the 3d division established in it at about half-past eleven.

While this was going on, Major Wilson, of the 48th regiment, carried the ravelin of St Roque by the gorge, with a detachment of two hundred men of the guard in the trenches, and, with the assistance of Major Squire, of the engineers, established himself within that work.

The 4th and light divisions moved to the attack from the camp, along the left of the river Rivellas, and of the inundation. They were not perceived by the enemy till they reached the covered way, and the advanced guards of the two divisions descended without difficulty into the ditch, protected by the fire of the parties stationed on the glacis for that purpose; and they advanced to the assault of the breaches, led by their gallant officers, with the utmost intrepidity; but such was the nature of the obstacles prepared by the enemy at the top and behind the breaches, and so determined their resistance, that our troops could not establish themselves within the place. Many brave officers and soldiers were killed or wounded by explosions at the top of the breaches; others who succeeded to them were obliged to give way, having found it impossible to penetrate the obstacles which the enemy had prepared to impede their progress. These attempts were repeated till after twelve at night, when, finding that success was not to be attained, and that Lieutenant-General Picton was established in the castle, I ordered that the 4th and light divisions might retire to the ground on which they had first assembled for the attack.

In the mean time Major-General Leith had pushed forward Major-General Walker's brigade on the left, supported by the 38th regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Nugent, and the 15th Portuguese regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel De Regoa; and he had made a false attack upon the Pardeleras with the 8th Caçadores under Major Hill. Major-General Walker forced the barrier on the road of Olivenca, and entered the covered way on the left of the bastion of St Vicente, close to the Guadiana. He there descended into the ditch, and escaladed the face of the bastion of St Vicente.

Lieutenant-General Leith supported this attack by the 38th regiment and the 15th Portuguese regiment; and our troops being thus established in the castle which commands all the works of the town and in the town, and the 4th and light divisions being formed again for the attack of the breaches, all resistance ceased; and at day-light in the morning, the governor, General Philippon, who had retired to fort St Christoval, surrendered, together with General Veilande, and all the staff and the whole garrison.

I have not got accurate reports of the strength of the garrison, or of the

number of the prisoners; but General Philippon has informed me, that it consisted of five thousand men at the commencement of the siege, of which twelve hundred were killed or wounded during the operations, besides those lost in the assault of the place. There were five French battalions, besides two of the regiments of Hesse D'Armstadt, and the artillery, engineers, &c.; and I understand there are four thousand prisoners.

It is impossible that any expressions of mine can convey to your lordship the sense which I entertain of the gallantry of the officers and troops upon this occasion.

The list of killed and wounded will shew that the general officers, the staff attached to them, the commanding, and other officers of regiments, put themselves at the head of the attacks which they severally directed, and set the example of gallantry which was so well followed by their men.

The duties in the trenches were conducted successively by the Hon. Major-General Colville, Major-General Bowes, and Major-General Kempt, under the superintendance of Lieutenant-General Picton. I have had occasion to mention all these officers during the course of the operations, and they all distinguished themselves, and were all wounded in the assault. I am particularly obliged to Lieutenant-General Picton, for the manner in which he arranged the attack of the castle, and for that in which he supported the attack, and established his troops in that important post.

Marshal Sir William Beresford assisted me in conducting the details of this siege, and I am much indebted to him for the cordial assistance which I received from him, as well during its progress, as in the last operation, which brought it to a termination.

Lieutenant-General Leith's arrangements for the false attack upon the Pardeleras, and that under Major General Walker, were likewise most judicious; and he availed himself of the circumstances of the moment, to push forward and support the attack under Major-General Walker, in a manner highly creditable to him. The gallantry and conduct of Major General Walker, who was also wounded, and that of the officers and troops under his command, were highly conspicuous.

The arrangements made by Major-General Colville for the attack by the 4th division, were very judicious, and he led them to the attack in the most gallant manner.

In consequence of the absence, on account of sickness, of Major-General Vandeleur and Colonel Beckwith, Lieut.-Col. Barnard commanded the light division in the assault, and distinguished himself not less by the manner in which he made the arrangements for that operation, than by his personal gallantry in its execution.

I have also to mention Major-General Harvey, of the Portuguese service, commanding a brigade in the 4th division, and Brigadier-General Champlemond, commanding the Portuguese brigade in the 3d division, as highly distinguished. Brigadier-Gen. Harvey was wounded in the storm.

Your lordship will see, in the list of killed and wounded, a list of the commanding officers of regiments. In Lieutenant-Colonel M'Leod, of the 43d regiment, who was killed in the breach, his majesty has sustained the loss of an officer who was an ornament to his profession, and was capable of rendering the most important services to his country. I must likewise mention Lieutenant Colonel Gibbs of the 52d regiment, who was wounded, and Major O'Hara of the 95th, unfortunately killed in the breach; Lieute-

nant-Colonel Elder of the 3d, and Major Algeo of the 1st Caçadores. Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt, of the 40th, likewise wounded, was highly distinguished, and Lieutenant-Colonel Blakeney of the royal fusileers, Knight of the 27th, Erskine of the 48th, and Captain Leaky, who commanded the 23d regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Ellis having been wounded during the previous operations of the siege.

In the 5th division I must mention Major Hill, of the 8th Caçadores, who directed the false attack upon the fort Pardeleras. It was impossible for any men to behave better than these did. I must likewise mention Lieutenant-Colonel Brook of the 4th regiment, the Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Carlton of the 44th, and Lieutenant-Colonel Grey, of the 30th, who was unfortunately killed. The 2d battalion of the 38th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Nugent, and the 15th Portuguese regiment under Colonel De Regoa, likewise performed their part in a very exemplary manner.

The officers and troops in the 3d division have distinguished themselves as usual in these operations. Lieutenant-General Picton has reported to me particularly the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Williams of the 60th, Lieutenant-Colonel Ridge of the 5th, who was unfortunately killed in the assault of the castle; Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes of the 45th regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzgerald of the 60th, Lieutenant-Colonels Trench and Manners of the 74th regiment, Major Carr, of the 83d, and the Hon. Major Pakenham, assistant-adjutant-general to the 3d division.

He has likewise particularly reported the good conduct of Colonel Campbell of the 94th, commanding the Hon. Major-General Colville's brigade, during his absence in command of the 4th division, whose conduct I have so frequently had occasion to report to your lordship. The officers and men of the corps of engineers and artillery were equally distinguished during the operations of the siege, and in its close. Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher continued to direct the works (notwithstanding that he was wounded in the sortie made by the enemy on the 19th of March), which were carried on by Major Squire and Major Burgoyne, under his directions. The former established the detachments under Major Wilson in the ravelin of St Roque on the night of the storm; the latter attended the attack of the 3d division on the castle. I have likewise to report the good conduct of Major Jones, Capt. Nicholas, and Capt. Williams of the royal engineers.

Major Dickson conducted the details of the artillery service during this siege, as well as upon former occasions, under the general superintendance of Lieutenant-Colonel Framingham, who, since the absence of Major-General Borthwick, has commanded the artillery with this army. I cannot sufficiently applaud the officers and soldiers of the British and Portugueze artillery during this siege, particularly Lieutenant-Colonel Robe, who opened the breaching batteries, Majors May and Holcombe, Captain Gardner and Lieutenant Bouchier, of the royal artillery; Captain De Rettberg, of the King's German artillery; and Major Tulloh, of the Portuguese.

Adverting to the extent of the details of the ordnance department during this siege, to the difficulty of weather, &c. with which Major Dickson had to contend, I must mention him most particularly to your lordship.

The officers of the adjutant and quarter-master-general's departments rendered me every assistance on this occasion, as well as those of my personal staff; and I have to add, that I have received reports from the general officers commanding divisions, of the

assistance they received from the officers of those departments attached to them, the greatest number of whom and of their personal staff are wounded.

In a former dispatch, I reported to your lordship the difficulties with which I had to contend, in consequence of the failure of the civil authorities of the province of Alentego to perform their duty, and supply the army with means of transport; these difficulties have continued to exist; but I must do General Victoria, the governor of Elvas, the justice to report, that he and the troops under his command, have made every exertion, and have done every thing in their power to contribute to our success.

Marshal Soult left Seville on the 1st instant with all the troops which he could collect in Andalusia; and he was in communication with the troops which had retired from Estremadura, under General Drouet, on the 3d, and he arrived at Llerena on the 4th. I had intended to collect the enemy in proportion as Marshal Soult should advance; and I requested Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Graham to retire gradually, while Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill should do the same from Don Benito and the upper parts of the Guadiana.

I do not think it certain that Marshal Soult has made any decided movement from Llerena since the 4th, although he has patroled forward with small detachments of cavalry, and the advanced guard of his infantry have been at Usagre.

None of the army of Portugal have moved to join him.

According to the last reports which I have received to the 4th instant on the frontiers of Castile, it appears that Marshal Marmont had established a body of troops between the Agueda and the Coa, and he had reconnoitred Almeida on the 3d. Brigadier-General Trant's division of militia had arrived on the Coa, and Brigadier-General Wilson's division was following with the cavalry, and Lieutenant-General the Conde D'Amarante was on his march, with a part of the corps under his command, towards the Douro.

I have the honour to enclose returns of the killed and wounded from the 31st of March, and in the assault of Badajoz, and a return of the ordnance, small arms, and ammunition found in the place; I will send returns of provisions by the next dispatch.

This dispatch will be delivered to your lordship by my aid-de-camp, Captain Canning; whom I beg leave to recommend to your protection. He has likewise the colours of the garrison, and the colours of the Hesse D'Armstadt regiment, to be laid at the feet of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. The French battalions in the garrison had no eagles.

(Signed) WELLINGTON.

Copy of a Dispatch from the Earl of Wellington, dated Camp at Badajoz, April 8.

My Lord,—It gives me great pleasure to inform your lordship that our numerous wounded officers and soldiers are doing well.

I have had great reason to be satisfied with the attention paid to them by Mr M'Gregor, the inspector-general of hospitals, and the medical gentlemen under his direction; and I trust that the loss to the service, upon this occasion, will not eventually be great.

I have the honour to be, &c.

WELLINGTON.

The Earl of Liverpool, &c.

Return of killed, wounded, and missing, of the army under the command of his Excellency General Arthur Earl of Wellington, K. B. at the Siege of Badajoz.

British loss from 3d to 5th April,

1812—3 rank and file killed; 1 officer, 26 rank and file, wounded.

British loss from 6th to 7th April, 1812—51 officers, 40 serjeants, 557 rank and file killed; 212 officers, 153 serjeants, 12 drummers, 1945 rank and file, wounded; 1 serjeant, 21 rank and file, missing.

Total British loss—51 officers, 40 serjeants, 560 rank and file killed; 213 officers, 153 serjeants, 12 drummers, 1971 rank and file, wounded; 1 serjeant, 21 rank and file, missing.

Portuguese loss from 2d to 5th April, 1812—1 officer, 9 rank and file, killed; 3 officers, 1 drummer, 12 rank and file, wounded.

Portuguese loss from 6th to 7th April, 1812—8 officers, 6 serjeants, 1 drummer, 140 rank and file, killed; 45 officers, 32 serjeants, 2 drummers, 466 rank and file, wounded; 30 rank and file missing.

Total Portuguese loss—9 officers, 6 serjeants, 1 drummer, 149 rank and file, killed; 48 officers, 32 serjeants, 3 drummers, 478 rank and file, wounded; 30 rank and file missing.

British loss during the siege—60 officers, 45 serjeants, 715 rank and file, wounded; 1 serjeant, 32 rank and file missing.

Portuguese loss during the siege—12 officers, 6 serjeants, 2 drummers, 195 rank and file, killed; 55 officers, 38 serjeants, 3 drummers, 684 rank and file, wounded; 30 rank and file missing.

Grand total from 18th March to 7th April, 1812, inclusive—72 officers, 51 serjeants, 2 drummers, 910 rank and file, killed; 308 officers, 216 serjeants, 17 drummers, 3248 rank and file, wounded; 1 serjeant, 62 rank and file, missing.

Actions at Sea.

London Gazette, Saturday, May 9.

Admiralty-Office, May 9.

His Majesty's ship Victorious, Port St George, Lissa, March 3.

Sir,—On the 16th ultimo, I arrived off the port of Venice; the weather was very foggy at the time, and continued so to the 21st, which prevented me reconnoitring the port. At half-past two o'clock p. m. on that day, a brig was seen E. N. S.; at three o'clock, a large ship with two more brigs and two settees in the same direction; all sail was made in chase; at four o'clock I made the Weazle's signal to prepare for action; at this time I was convinced that the ship seen was one of the enemy's line-of-battle ships, proceeding from Venice to the port of Pola, in Istria. The enemy were sailing in a line of battle, with the two gun-boats, and one brig a-head, the other two brigs in a line a-stern. At half-past two o'clock a. m. I perceived that one of the enemy's brigs dropped a-stern, and that the line-of-battle ship had shortened sail to allow her to close again. I hailed the Weazle, and ordered Captain Andrew to endeavour to pass the Victorious, and, if possible, to bring the brigs a-stern of the commodore to action, in hopes of inducing him to shorten sail, which had the desired effect. At a quarter past four o'clock, his majesty's brig Weazle commenced the action with the two brigs. At half-past four we commenced action at the distance of half pistol shot, with the line-of-battle ship, neither ship having fired a single shot until that time. At five we perceived a brig to blow up: at day-light I perceived the Weazle in chace of the brigs, the gun-boats not in sight. I recalled her, as she did not

appear to close with the chace. We were at this time in seven fathoms water off the Point of Grao, and I was fearful we might want assistance from her, in case either of the ships had got on shore on the bank. Captain Andrew, on being recalled, placed his brig very judiciously on the bow of the line-of-battle ship, within pistol-shot, and in that situation he gave her three broadsides. The enemy for nearly the last two hours had been rendered perfectly unmanageable, and had kept up a very slow fire, and that chiefly from two guns on the quarter-deck: her mizen-mast fell over her side about a quarter before nine o'clock. At nine they hailed us, and said they had struck; I sent on board Mr Peake, the first lieutenant, to take possession of her. I found the squadron we had engaged consisted of two gun-boats, the Mameluke brig of 10 guns, and Jena and Mercure of 18 guns each, with the Rivoli, of 74 guns, bearing the broad pendant of Commodore Barré, the commander-in-chief of the enemy's forces in the Adriatic. From the length of the action, and the smoothness of the water, the loss of men and the damages on both sides, I am sorry to say, have been very great indeed, neither ship having been above half musket shot from each other during the whole of the action, which only ceased at intervals, when the ships were hid from each other by the fog and smoke, and were not even able to see the flashes of each other's guns.

I feel great satisfaction in saying that the conduct of Commodore Barré, during the whole of the action, convinced me I had to deal with a most gallant and brave man, and, in manœuvring his ship, a most experienced and skilful officer. He did not surrender his ship till nearly two hours after she was rendered unmanageable, and had 400 killed or wounded; his captain and most of his officers either killed or wounded. By the returns you will perceive, sir, that our loss, too, has been very severe. I have to regret, as well as the service, the loss of two very fine young men, Lieutenants Thomas H. Griffiths and Robert S. Ashbridge, of the royal marines, who were mortally wounded early in the action, with many other brave and good men, both seamen and marines. The conduct of the officers has been throughout highly meritorious, both during the action, and also in securing the masts of the ship, in the very bad weather we met before we gained the port of Lissa. Having received a contusion from a splinter early in the action, for some days afterwards I have been deprived nearly of my eye-sight; all which time the exertions by Mr Peake, my senior lieutenant, prevented my inability from being of any detriment to his majesty's service. The Rivoli, in crossing the Gulph of Fiume, lost her fore and main-masts; but by the exertions of Lieutenants Whyte and Coffin, who had charge of her, she was brought safe into the port of Lissa under jury-masts. I feel particularly indebted to Captain Andrew, of the Weazle, for his exertions during the action, and also for the assistance he gave to the Rivoli afterwards. I have sent enclosed a copy of his letter, reporting to me his conduct, and that of his officers and crew, during the night of the action. He particularly mentions his senior lieutenant, whom he strongly recommends to the notice of the commander-in-chief. The numbers of wounded, and the severity of the wounds, have caused Mr Baird, the surgeon, and Mr O'Meara, the only assistant on board, very great fatigue. The conduct of Mr W. H. Gibbons and Mr John J. Keeling, master's-mates, deserves notice. The conduct of Captain Stevens, of the royal ma-

rines, I cannot avoid mentioning, and that of Mr Crawford the master was perfectly to my satisfaction. During the whole of this severe action not a single explosion took place on board, or a man hurt, either through carelessness or accident; both the officers and men, for their steady and cool conduct, deserve every credit. I have sent herewith the returns, as far as I have been able to procure, of the killed and wounded on board the Rivoli. I landed a great number of the wounded prisoners in Istria, having sent a flag of truce to the town of Pirang, to request the commandant of that port would send off boats to receive them, which accordingly he did. I have sent the remainder of them from this port by a schooner to Spalatro, in Dalmatia. When we commenced the action, the Victorious had only 506 persons actually on board, 60 of which were in the sick list, but most of the sick were able to assist in the action. The Rivoli had on board 863 persons at the commencement of the action.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) JOHN TALBOT,
Captain of the Victorious, and senior officer of the upper part of the Adriatic.

To Charles Rowley, Esq. Captain of the Eagle, and senior officer in the Adriatic.

His Majesty's sloop Weazle, Feb. 22, Cape Salvore, S.E. by E. distant 12 or 14 miles.

Sir,—In pursuance of your directions this morning at half past two, ordering me to a-head and bring the enemy's brigs to action, I have the honour to inform you, that at a quarter past four A. M. I came up with two French brigs, one within half pistol-shot, which we immediately engaged, and after an action of 40 minutes, she blew up without doing us any damage. I am sorry we saved only three men from her, and those much bruised and wounded. She proves to have been the French brig Le Mercure, of 18 24-pounder carronades, commanded by a Lieutenant de Vaisseau. During the greater part of this time the other brig engaged us on our bow, but seeing the fate of her companion, and from the darkness of the morning, and our rigging being much cut, she made her escape. At day-light we observed this brig and another, the first about three miles a-head. At six o'clock made all sail in chace; answered the signal of recall; bore up. At eight o'clock came across the Rivoli's bows, within musket-shot, and gave her a broadside, wore, and tacked as necessary to continue raking her; at nine she fired a gun to leeward, when we ceased firing. The whole of the afore-mentioned service, I am extremely happy to say, was performed without the loss of a man on my part, from the steady, determined, and cool behaviour of every officer and man on board; and I most earnestly request you will be pleased to recommend to the commander-in-chief, Mr George Elliott, my first lieutenant, and every other officer and man on board his majesty's sloop, which I have the honour to command.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) JOHN ANDREW,
Commander.

To John Talbot, Esq. Captain of his Majesty's ship Victorious.

Northumberland, off the Penmarks, wind S.S.W. light breeze, and fine weather, May 24.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you, the object of the orders I received from you on the 12th instant, to proceed off L'Orient for the purpose of intercepting two French frigates and a brig lately seen at sea, has been accomplished, by their total destruction, at the entrance of that port, by his majesty's ship under my command, (the Growler gun-brig being in com-

any) under the circumstances I beg leave to relate to you. On Friday the 22d instant, at a quarter past ten A.M. the N.W. point of the Isle Groa bearing from the Northumberland north by compass, ten miles distant, and the wind very light from W. by W. they were discovered in the N.W. crowding all sail before it for L'Orient. My first wish was to endeavour to cut them off to windward of the island, and a signal was made to the Growler (seven miles off in the S.W.) to chace; but finding I could not effect it, the Northumberland was pushed by every exertion round the S.E. end of Groa, and, by hauling to the wind as close as I could to leeward of it, I had the satisfaction of fetching to windward of the harbour's mouth, before the enemy's ships reached it. Their commander seeing himself thus cut off, made a signal to his consorts, and hauled to the wind on the larboard tack to windward of Point Talcet, and they appeared to speak each other. I continued beating to windward between Groa and the continent to close with them, exposed to the batteries on both sides when I stood within their reach, which was unavoidable. The wind had by this time freshened considerably, and was about W.N.W.: at 49 minutes after two P.M. the enemy (in force as above described) bore up in close line a-head; and under every sail that could be set, favoured by the fresh wind, made a bold and determined attempt to run between me and the shore, under cover of the numerous batteries with which it is lined in that part. I placed the Northumberland to meet them as close as I could to the Point de Pierre Laye; with her head to the shore, and the main-topsail shivering, and made dispositions for laying them alongside; but they hauled so very close round the point, following the direction of the coast to the eastward of it, that, in my ignorance of the depth of water so near the shore, I did not think it practicable, consistent with the safety of his majesty's ship (drawing near 25 feet water) to prosecute that plan, I therefore bore up, and steered parallel to them at the distance of about two cables' length, and opened the broadside on them, which was returned by a very animated and well-directed fire of round, grape, and other descriptions of shot, supported by three batteries, for the space of twenty one minutes, and was very destructive to our sails and rigging. My object during that time was to prevent their hauling outside the dry dock named Le Graul; but in steering sufficiently close to it to leave them no room to pass between me and it, and at the same time to avoid running on it myself, the utmost difficulty and anxiety was produced by the cloud of smoke which drifted a-head of the ship and totally obscured it. However, by the care and attention of Mr Hugh Stewart, the master, the ship was carried within the distance of her own length on the south-west side, in quarter-less seven fathoms, and the enemy were in consequence obliged, as their only alternative, to attempt passing within it, where there was not water enough, and they all grounded, under every sail, on the rocks between it and the shore. The sails and rigging of the Northumberland were so much damaged, that I was obliged to leave the enemy to the effects of the falling tide, it being only one quarter ebb, while I repaired the rigging, and shifted the foretopsail, which was rendered entirely useless; working to windward during that time under what sail I could set, to prevent falling to leeward; in which interval, at five o'clock, the Growler joined, and fired on the enemy occasionally. At twenty-eight minutes after five, I anchored the Northumberland in six and a half fathoms water, Point de Pierre Laye bearing N.W.

half N., the citadel of Port Louis E. three quarters E., and the rock named Le Grand N. half E two cables' length distant, with her broadside bearing on the enemy's two frigates and a brig, at point-blank range, all of them having fallen over on their sides next the shore as the tide left them, and exposed their copper to us, and the main-masts of one frigate and the brig were gone; and from 34 minutes after five till 49 minutes past six (which was near the time of low water), a deliberate and careful fire was kept up on them, at which time, believing I had fully effected the object of my endeavours, the crews having quitted their vessels, all their bottoms being pierced by very many of our shot, so low down as to ensure their filling on the rising tide, and the leading frigate being completely in flames, communicated to the hull from a fire which broke out in her foretop, I got under sail. Three batteries fired at the ship during the whole time she was at anchor, and although the position was so far well chosen that she was out of the range of two of them, the other (to which the enemy's vessels were nearest) reached her, and did as much execution in the hull as all the fire she had been exposed to before. I directed the commander of the Growler to stand in and fire, to prevent the enemy from returning to their vessels after I had ceased At five minutes before eight, the frigate on fire blew up with an awful explosion, leaving no remains of her visible. At the close of day I anchored for the night, out of reach of the batteries on both sides, Point Taleet bearing N.N.W. half W.; S.E. point of Groa S.S W. half W. the enemy's vessels N. by E. At ten, the other frigate appeared to be on fire also (some smoke having been seen on board her from the time the firing ceased), and at half past eleven the flames burst forth from her ports and every part with unextinguishable fury, which unlooked-for event leaving me nothing more to attempt in the morning, the brig being quite on her beam ends, and very much damaged by our shot in every part of her bottom, even very near her keel, I weighed anchor at midnight, with a very light air from the northward, with the Growler in company, profiting by the brightness of the moon to get to sea; but it was so near calm that I made very little progress, and therefore saw the frigate burning from head to stern all night, and explode at 35 minutes after two in the morning of yesterday, leaving a portion of her afterpart still burning till it was entirely consumed; and in the course of the day I had the satisfaction to see, from off the N.W. point of Groa, a third fire and explosion in the same spot, which could have been no other than the brig. During the time of firing on the enemy's vessels, a seaman, who states himself to be a native of Portugal, captured in the ship Harmony, of Lisbon, by the frigates, on the 22d of February, swam from one of them to the Northumberland, by whom I am informed their names were l'Arianne and l'Andromache, of 44 guns and 450 men each, and the Mameluke brig, of 18 guns and 150 men; that they sailed from the Loire in the month of January, had been cruizing in various parts of the Atlantic, and had destroyed 36 vessels of different nations (Americans, Spaniards, Portuguese, and English), taking the most valuable parts of their cargoes on board the frigates (and they appeared very deep for ships so long at sea), and one vessel they sent as a cartel to England, with about 200 prisoners. I am happy to have now the gratifying duty to discharge of bearing testimony to the creditable conduct of every officer and man I had the honour to command on the occasion above related, whose zealous exertions in supporting the honour of his majesty's

naval power, and in humbling that of the enemy, were conspicuously displayed, without regard to the peculiar intricacy of the situation, or the risks and difficulties which appeared to interpose; and I hope the circumstances of his station may permit me to make particular report of the services of the senior lieutenant, John Banks, without prejudice to, or neglect of, the other meritorious and deserving officers, who were all equally inspired with intrepidity, and possessed with confidence and coolness, which rendered that qualification the more valuable. But as the safety of his majesty's ship, and the success of the operations which resulted in a navigation so narrow and difficult, with almost every description of danger to avoid, is attributable, next to Providence, to the ability with which she was steered and conducted under the direction of Mr Stewart (the master), and the pilot, I should be wanting in my duty if I were to omit to represent to you, that nothing could exceed the firmness, good judgment, and skill of those officers whose experience on the coast was extremely beneficial to the service, and Mr Stewart's counsels were of the greatest assistance to me. Lieutenant J. Weeks, commanding the Growler gun brig, made every effort that vessel was capable of to render me service, and shewed a perfect readiness to execute the few directions I had occasion to give him.

The captain then reports the injury sustained by his ship, which was that of being damaged a little in the hull, but more in the masts, yards, and rigging; and concludes,—A line-of-battle ship, with sails bent, and top gallant yards across, lay in the harbour of l'Orient, spectator of the operations of the day, at the entrance of it; but the wind did not serve till night for her coming to the support of her friends: every assistance, however, was afforded them of boats, men, &c. from the port, directed, as I apprehend, by the admiral in person. I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) H. Hotham, Capt.
Rear-Admiral Sir Harry Neale, Bart. &c.

A list of killed and wounded on board his Majesty's ship Northumberland, on the 22d day of May.

Killed—1 seaman and one private marine.

Wounded—1 officer, 3 petty officers, 19 seamen, and 5 private marines; of whom 4 are dangerously, 10 severely, and 14 slightly.

Storm and Capture of Fort Napoleon, &c.

London Gazette Extraordinary. Thursday, June 18, 1812.

Downing-Street, June 17.

Major Currie, aid de camp to Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, arrived this evening at Lord Bathurst's office with a dispatch, of which the following is an extract, addressed to the Earl of Liverpool by General the Earl of Wellington, dated Fuente Guinaldo, May 28, 1812:—

When I found that the enemy had retired from this frontier, on the 24th of April, I directed Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill to carry into execution the operations against the enemy's posts and establishments at the passage of the Tagus at Almarez.

Owing to the necessary preparations for this expedition, Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill could not begin his march, with part of the 2d division of infantry, till the 12th inst. and he attained the objects of his expedition on the 19th, by taking by storm Forts Napoleon and Ragusa and the tetes-du-pont, and other works, by which

the enemy's bridge was guarded, by destroying those forts and works, and the enemy's bridge and establishments, and by taking their magazines, and 259 prisoners, and 18 pieces of cannon.

I have the honour to enclose Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill's report of this brilliant exploit; and I beg to draw your lordship's attention to the difficulties with which he had to contend, as well from the nature of the country, as from the works which the enemy had constructed, and to the ability and the characteristic qualities displayed by Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill in persevering in the line, and confining himself to the objects chalked out by his instructions, notwithstanding the various obstacles opposed to his progress.

I have nothing to add to Lieutenant General Sir Rowland Hill's report of the conduct of the officers and troops under his command, excepting to express my concurrence in all he says in their praise. Too much cannot be said of the brave officers and troops who took by storm, without the assistance of cannon, such works as the enemy's forts on both banks of the Tagus, fully garrisoned, in good order, and defended by 18 pieces of artillery.

Your lordship is aware, that the road of Almaraz affords the only good military communication across the Tagus, and from the Tagus to the Guadiana, below Toledo. All the permanent bridges below the bridge of Arzobispo, have been destroyed during the war, by one or other of the belligerents, and the enemy have found it impossible to repair them. Their bridge, which Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill has destroyed, was one of boats, and I doubt their having the means of replacing it. The communications from the bridges of Arzobispo and Talavera to the Guadiana, are very difficult, and cannot be deemed military communications for a large army. The result, then, of Lieutenant-General Hill's expedition has been to cut off the shortest and best communication between the armies of the South and of Portugal.

Nearly about the time that the enemy's troops, reported in my last dispatch to have moved into the Condado de Niebla, marched from Seville, it is reported that another considerable detachment under Marshal Soult went towards the blockade of Cadiz, and it was expected that another attack was to be made upon Tariffa.

It appears, however, that the enemy received early intelligence of Sir Rowland Hill's march. The troops under the command of General Drouet made a movement to their left, and arrived upon the Guadiana at Medellin on the 7th instant: and on the 18th, a detachment of the cavalry under the command of the same general drove in, as far as Ribera, the picquets of Lieutenant-General Sir William Erskine's division of cavalry, which had remained in lower Estremadura, with a part of the 2d division of infantry; and Lieutenant-General Hamilton's division of infantry. Marshal Soult likewise moved from the blockade of Cadiz towards Cordova; and the troops which had marched from Seville into the Condado de Niebla, returned to Seville nearly about the same time; but Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill had attained his object on the 19th, and had returned to Truxillo, and was beyond all risk of being attacked by a superior force on the 21st. The enemy's troops have retired into Cordova.

Since the accounts have been received of Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill's expedition, the enemy's troops have likewise been put in motion in Old and New Castile; the first division, under General Foy, and a division of the army of the centre under General D'Armagnac, crossed the Ta-

gus, by the bridge of Arzobispo, on the 21st, and have moved by the road of Deleytosa, to relieve or withdraw the post which still remained in the tower of Mirabete.

The whole of the army of Portugal have likewise made a movement to their left: the 2d division being on the Tagus, and Marshal Marmont's head quarters have been removed from Salamanca to Fontieros.

By a letter from Sir Howard Douglas, of the 24th instant, I learn, that the troops under General Bonnet, after having made two plundering excursions towards the frontiers of Gallicia, had again entered the Asturias, and were on the 17th in possession of Oviedo, Gijon, and Grado.

In the mean time, the troops under General Mendizabel, are in possession of the town of Burgos, the enemy still keeping the castle; and in all parts of the country the boldness and activity of the chiefs of Guerillas are increasing; and their operations against the enemy are becoming daily more important.

I forward this dispatch by Major Currie, aid-de-camp to Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, whom I beg leave to recommend to your lordship's notice and protection.

Truxillo, May 21, 1812.

My Lord, I have the satisfaction to acquaint your lordship, that your instructions relative to the capture and destruction of the enemy's works at Almaraz, have been most fully carried into effect by a detachment of troops under my orders, which marched from Almandralejo on the 12th instant.

The bridge was, as your lordship knows, protected by strong works thrown up by the French on both sides of the river, and further covered on the southern side by the castle and redoubts of Mirabete, about a league off, commanding the pass of that name, through which runs the road to Madrid, being the only one passable for carriages of any description by which the bridge can be approached.

The works on the left bank of the river were a tete du-pont, built of masonry, and strongly entrenched; and on the high ground above it, a large and well-constructed fort, called Napoleon, with an interior entrenchment, and loop-holed tower in its centre; this fort contained nine pieces of cannon, with a garrison of between four and five hundred men. There being also on the opposite side of the river, on a height immediately above the bridge, a very complete fort recently constructed, which flanked and added much to its defence.

On the morning of the 16th, the troops reached Jareicejo, and the same evening marched in three columns; the left column, commanded by Lieutenant-General Chowne (28th and 34th regiments under Colonel Wilson and the 6th Portuguese caçadores,) towards the castle of Mirabete; the right column, under Major-General Howard (50th, 71st, and 92d regiments), which I accompanied myself to a pass in the mountains, through which a most difficult and circuitous footpath leads by the village of Romangordo to the bridge; the centre column under Major-General Long (6th and 18th Portuguese infantry, under Colonel Ashworth, and 13th Light Dragoons, with the artillery,) advanced upon the high road to the pass of Mirabete.

The two flank columns were provided with ladders, and it was intended that either of them should proceed to escalade the forts against which they were directed, had circumstances proved favourable; the difficulties, however, which each had to encounter on its march were such, that it was impossible for them to reach their respective points before day break; I

judged it best, therefore, as there was no longer a possibility of surprise, to defer the attack until we should be better acquainted with the nature and position of the works; and the troops bivouacked on the Leina.

I determined on endeavouring to penetrate to the bridge by the mountain path leading through the village of Romangordo, although, by that means, I should be deprived of the use of my artillery.

On the evening of the 18th, I moved with Major-General Howard's brigade, and the 6th Portuguese regiment, for the operation, provided with scaling ladders, &c. Although the distance marched did not exceed five or six miles, the difficulties of the road were such, that with the united exertions of officers and men, the column could not be formed for the attack before daylight. Confiding, however, in the valour of the troops, I ordered the immediate assault of Fort Napoleon. My confidence was fully justified by the event.

The 1st battalion of the 50th, and one wing of the 71st regiment, regardless of the enemy's artillery and musketry, escaladed the work in three places, nearly at the same time. The enemy seemed at first determined, and his fire was destructive; but the ardour of our troops was irresistible, and the garrison was driven at the point of the bayonet, through the several entrenchments of the tete-du-pont, across the bridge, which having been cut by those on the opposite side of the river, many leaped into the river, and thus perished.

The impression made upon the enemy's troops was such, that the panic soon communicated itself to those on the right bank of the river, and Fort Ragusa was instantly abandoned, the garrison flying in the greatest confusion towards Naval Moral.

I cannot sufficiently praise the conduct of the 50th and 71st regiments, to whom the assault fell. The cool and steady manner in which they formed and advanced, and the intrepidity with which they mounted the ladders, and carried the place, was worthy of those distinguished corps, and the officers who led them.

Could the attack have been made before day, the 92d regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Cameron, and the remainder of the 71st regiment, under the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Cadogan, were to have escaladed the tete-du-pont, and effected the destruction of the bridge, at the same time that the attack was made on Fort Napoleon. The impossibility of advancing deprived them of this opportunity of distinguishing themselves; but the share which they had in the operation, and the zeal which they displayed, entitles them to my warmest commendation; and I cannot avoid to mention the steadiness and good discipline of the 6th Portuguese infantry, and two companies of the 60th regiment, under Colonel Ashworth, which formed the reserve to this attack.

Our operations in this quarter were much favoured by a diversion made by Lieutenant-General Chowne, with the troops under his orders, against the castle of Mirabete, which succeeded in inducing the enemy to believe that we should not attack the forts near the bridge, until we had formed the pass, and thus have made way for our artillery. The lieutenant-general conducted this operation, as well as his former advance, entirely to my satisfaction. I regret much that the peculiar situation of Mirabete should have prevented my allowing the gallant corps under his orders to follow up an operation which they had commenced with much spirit, and were so anxious to complete.

I cannot too strongly express how much I am satisfied with the conduct

of Major-General Howard through the whole of this operation, the most arduous part of which has fallen to his share; and particularly of the manner in which he led his brigade to the assault. He was ably assisted by his staff, Brigade Major Wemyss, of the 50th, and Lieutenant Battersby, of the 23d light dragoons.

To Major-General Long I am also indebted for his assistance, although his column was not immediately engaged.

Lieutenant-Col. Stewart and Major Harrison, of the 50th, and Major Cother, of the 71st, commanded the three attacks, and led them in a most gallant and spirited manner.

I have received the greatest assistance from Lieutenant-Colonel Dickson, of the royal artillery, whom, with a brigade of 24-pounders, a company of British and one of Portuguese artillery, your lordship was pleased to put under my orders. Circumstances did not permit his guns being brought into play; but his exertions and those of his officers and men, during the attack and destruction of the place, were unwearied. In the latter service, Lieutenant Thiele, of the Royal German artillery, was blown up; and we have to regret in him a most gallant officer: he had particularly distinguished himself in the asasult. Lieutenant Wright, of the royal engineers, has also rendered me very essential service; he is a most intelligent, gallant, and meritorious officer; and I must not omit also to mention Lieutenant Hillier, of the 29th regiment, whose knowledge of this part of the country proved of great assistance.

Your lordship will observe, from the return of ordnance and stores which I have the honour to enclose, that Almaraz had been considered by the enemy in the light of a most important station, and I am happy to state, that its destruction has been most complete. The towers of masonry which were in Forts Napoleon and Ragusa, have been entirely levelled; the ramparts of both in great measure destroyed, and the whole apparatus of the bridge, together with the work-shops, magazines, and every piece of timber which could be found, entirely destroyed.

A colour belonging to the 4th battalion of the Corps Etranger was taken by the 71st regiment, and I shall have the honour of forwarding it to your lordship.

Our loss has not been severe, considering the circumstances under which the attack was made. I enclose a list of the killed and wounded. Captain Chandler, of the 50th regiment, (the only officer killed in the assault) has, I am sorry to say, left a large family to deplore his loss. He was one of the first to mount the ladder, and fell upon the parapet, after giving a distinguished example to his men.

I have had frequent occasions to mention to your lordship, in terms of the highest praise, the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Rooke, assistant Adjutant-General. During the whole period I have had a separate command in this country, that officer has been with me, and rendered most essential service to my corps; on the present expedition he has eminently distinguished himself, and I beg leave particularly to notice his conduct. Your lordship is also aware of the merits of Lieutenant-Colonel Offeney, my assistant Quarter-Master General, of whose valuable aid I have been deprived during the latter part of this expedition Though labouring under severe illness, he accompanied me to the serious detriment of his health, and until it was totally impracticable for him to proceed. Captain Thorn, deputy assistant Quarter-Master-General, succeeded to his duties; and I am indebted to him for his assistance, and also to Major Hill, and my personal staff.

The Marquis de Almeida, member of the junta of Estremadura, has done me the honour to accompany me, since I have been in the province: I have received from him, as well as from the people, the most ready and effectual assistance which it was in their power to bestow.

Major Currie, my Aide-de camp, will deliver to your lordship this dispatch, and the colour taken from the enemy, and will be able to give you any further particulars. I beg to recommend him to your lordship.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) R. Hill, Lieut. Gen.

I enclose a return of prisoners, in number 259, including the Governor, one Lieutenant-Col., and 15 officers. I also transmit a return of provisions in the forts near the bridge, taken from one signed by the Chief of the French Commissariat on the 18th of May.

Return of killed and wounded, of the army under the command of his Excellency General the Earl of Wellington, K B under the immediate orders of Lieutenant General Sir Rowland Hill, K. B. at the storm and capture of Fort Napoleon, and the enemy's other works, in the neighbourhood of Imaraz, on the morning of the 19th of May, 1812

Total British loss—1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 serjeant, 30 rank and file, killed; 2 captains, 6 lieutenants, 4 ensigns, 10 serjeants, 1 drummer, 117 rank and file, wounded.

Total Portuguese loss—1 ensign, 3 rank and file, wounded.

General Total—1 captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 serjeant, 30 rank and file, killed; 2 captains, 6 lieutenants, 5 ensigns, 10 serjeants, 1 drummer, 120 rank and file, wounded.

Actions at Sea.

London Gazette, Saturday, July 18.

His Majesty's ship Dictator, in the Sleeve, July 7.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you, that yesterday evening, being off Mardoe with the brigs named in the margin, the mast-heads of the enemy's squadron were seen over the rocks; and Captain Robiliard, of the Podargus, in the most handsome manner volunteered to lead the squadron in to attack them, he having a man on board acquainted with the place; and as neither the masters or the pilots of either of the ships conceived themselves equal to the charge, I did not hesitate to accept his kind offer, well knowing that the British flag would meet with nothing but honour in such hands. In the entrance of the passage the Podargus unfortunately took the ground; by which circumstance I was deprived of the valuable and gallant services of her commander during the remainder of the day, and was, in consequence, obliged to leave the Flamer to her assistance; but in Captain Weir, of the Calypso, I found every thing that could be wished for, which, in a great measure, made up for the loss which I had sustained in the Podargus and Flamer. By this time, half-past seven p. m. we had arrived within one mile of the enemy, who were running inside the rocks under a press of sail; the Calypso, which had also grounded for a short time, was now leading us through the passage, and both she and ourselves engaged with the squadron and numerous gun-boats. However, at half past nine, I had the satisfaction, after sailing 12 miles through a passage in some places scarcely wide enough to admit of our studding sail booms being out,

Podargus, Calypso, Flamer gun brig.

of running the Dictator's bow upon the land with her broadside towards the enemy (within hail) as per margin,† who were anchored with springs on their cables, close together, and supported by gun-boats, in the small creek of Lyngoe, the Calypso most nobly following us up. In half an hour the frigate was literally battered to atoms, and the flames bursting forth from her hatchways; the brigs had also struck; and most of the gun-boats were completely beaten, and some sunk. The action had scarcely ceased, and the ship afloat, than we found ourselves again attacked by the gun-boats which had retreated on seeing the fate of their squadron, and were again collecting from all quarters; but Captain Weir, of the Calypso, having taken a most advantageous position, engaged them with the greatest gallantry and effect; indeed, I am at a loss how to express my approbation of the prompt exertion of this gallant and meritorious officer. The Podargus and Flamer in the mean time were warmly engaged with numerous batteries and gun-boats, both brigs being aground; but by the uncommon exertion and extreme gallantry of Captain Robiliard, and the officers and crews of the brigs, they at last got afloat very much cut up: on this occasion Lieutenant England particularly distinguished himself. At three a. m. having got the Dictator, Calypso, and prize brigs in the fair way, we attempted to get out through the passages, when we were assailed by a division of gun-boats from behind the rocks, so situated that not a gun could be brought to bear on them from either vessel; in this situation both prize brigs grounded, and notwithstanding every exertion on the part of Lieutenant James Wilkie, of this ship, in the Laaland, who had extinguished a fire on board her which was burning with great fury, and Lieutenant Hooper, of the Calypso, in the Kiel, we had to abandon them complete wrecks, humanity forbidding our setting them on fire, owing to the number of wounded men they had on board.

I cannot conclude this letter without mentioning in terms of praise, Mr William Buchanan, the first lieutenant of this ship, a most gallant and excellent officer. From the nature of the attack, I have been obliged to lengthen my report, probably more than the service performed justifies; but in that case, I trust you will only attribute it to my anxiety to endeavour to do justice to a set of officers and men who, I am sure, have done their duty to admiration. The conduct of every individual on board his majesty's ship I have the honour to command has been highly meritorious, and I cannot omit to add the names of Lieuts. Duell, Dutton, and Edwards, Captain Triscott, Lieut. James Baker, and Lieut. F. Macnamara, of the royal marines, Mr R. West, the master, and Mr John Luckamlee, the purser. The skilful attention of Mr Hay, the surgeon, to our own men as well as our enemies, has been beyond all praise; and he speaks in the highest terms of Mr Saunderson, his assistant. Captains Robiliard and Weir, mention the conduct of all their officers and men to have been such as characterise Britons on such occasions, and I am sure I can with great justice add my tribute of applause. Enclosed I have the honour to transmit a list of the killed, &c. although I cannot help deploring the loss of so many brave men, it is much less than could be reasonably expected. The Danes acknowledge to have lost about 300 killed and wounded; I rather suspect five. Our ships

† Nayaden, Laaland, Samsoe, Kiel.

have suffered extremely in their hulls, masts, and rigging.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) J. P. STEWART, Captain.

To Sir James Saumarez, Bart. K. B. Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief, &c.

Statement of the Enemy's Force.

Nayaden, of 38 guns, mounting 50 long 24-pounders on the main deck, and 300 men.

Laaland, of 20 guns, long 18-pounders, and 125 men.

Samsoe, of 18 guns, long 18-pounders, and 125 men.

Kiel, of 18 guns, long 18-pounders, and 125 men.

25 gun boats, carrying each 2 long 18 or 24-pounders, and from 50 to 60 men.

Return of killed, wounded, and missing on board his Majesty's ships Dictator, Podargus, Calypso, and Flamer.

Dictator—5 killed; 16 severely, 8 slightly, wounded.

Podargus—4 severely, 5 slightly, wounded.

Calypso—3 killed; 1 severely wounded; 2 missing.

Flamer—1 killed; 1 severely wounded.

Total—9 killed; 26 severely; 13 slightly wounded; 2 missing.

J. P. STEWART, Capt.

BATTLE OF SALAMANCA.

London Gazette Extraordinary, Sunday, August 16.

Downing-Street, August 16.

Lord Clinton, aide-de-camp to the Earl of Wellington, arrived this morning at the War Department, with dispatches, addressed by his lordship to Earl Bathurst, dated the 21st, 24th, and 28th ultimo, of which the following are extracts:—

Cabrerizos, near Salamanca, July 21, 1812.

In the course of the 15th and 16th the enemy moved all their troops to the right of their position on the Douro, and their army was concentrated between Toro and San Roman.

A considerable body passed the Douro at Toro, on the evening of the 16th; and I moved the allied army to their left on that night, with an intention to concentrate on the Guerena.

It was totally out of my power to prevent the enemy from passing the Douro at any point at which he might think it expedient, as he had in his possession all the bridges over that river, and many of the fords; but he recrossed that river at Toro, in the night of the 16th, moved his whole army to Tordesillas, where he again crossed the Douro on the morning of the 17th, and assembled his army on that day at La Naya del Rey, having marched not less than ten leagues in the course of the 17th.

The 4th and light divisions of infantry, and Major-Gen. Anson's brigades of cavalry, had marched to Castrejon on the night of the 16th, with a view to the assembly of the army on the Guarena, and were at Castrejon under the orders of Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton, on the 17th, not having been ordered to proceed further, in consequence of my knowledge that the enemy had not passed the Douro at Toro; and there was not time to call them in between the hour at which I received the intelligence of the whole of the enemy's army being at La Nava, and day-light of the morning of the 18th. I therefore took measures to provide for their retreat and junction, by moving the 5th division to Tordesillas de la Orden,

and Major-Gen. Le Marchant's, Major-Gen. Alten's, and Major-General Bock's brigades of cavalry to Alaejos.

The enemy attacked the troops at Castrejon, at dawn of day of the 18th, and Sir Stapleton Cotton maintained the post, without suffering any loss, till the cavalry had joined them. Nearly about the same time the enemy turned by Alaejos the left flank of our position at Castrejon.

The troops retired in admirable order to Tordesillas de la Orden, having the enemy's whole army on their flank or in their rear; and thence to the Guarena, which river they passed under the same circumstances, and effected their junction with the army.

The Guarena, which runs into the Douro, is formed by four streams, which unite about a league below Canizal, and the enemy took a strong position on the heights on the right of that river, and I placed the 5th, 4th, and light divisions, on the opposite heights, and had directed the remainder of the army to cross the Upper Guarena at Vallesa, in consequence of the appearance of the enemy's intention to turn our right.

Shortly after his arrival, however, the enemy crossed the Guarena at Garteillo, below the junction of the streams, and manifested an intention to press upon our left, and to enter the valley of Ganizal. Major-General Alten's brigade of cavalry, supported by the 3d dragoons, were already engaged with the enemy's cavalry, and had taken, among other prisoners, the French general Carrier; and I desired the honourable Lieut.-Gen. Cole to attack, with Major-Gen. William Anson's and Brigadier-Gen. Harvey's brigades of infantry (the latter under the command of Col. Stubbs), the enemy's infantry which were supporting their cavalry. He immediately attacked and defeated them with the 27th and 40th regiments, which advanced to the charge with bayonets, Col. Stubbs's Portuguese brigade supporting, and the enemy gave way: many were killed and wounded; and Major-General Alten's brigade of cavalry having pursued the fugitives, 240 prisoners were taken.

In these affairs Lieutenant-General the honourable G. L. Cole, Major-General V. Alten, Major-Gen. William Anson, Lieut.-Col. Arentschildt of the 1st hussars, and Hervey of the 14th light dragoons, Lieutenant-Colonel Maclean of the 27th, and Major Archdall of the 40th, Lieutenant-Colonel Anderson, commanding the 11th, and Major de Azeredo, commanding the 23d Portuguese regiment, distinguished themselves.

The enemy did not make any further attempt on our left; but having reinforced their troops on that side, and withdrawn those which had moved to their left, I brought back our's from Vallesa.

On the 19th, in the afternoon, the enemy withdrew all the troops from their right, and marched to their left by Tarragona, apparently with an intention of turning our right. I crossed the Upper Guarena at Vallesa and El Olmo with the whole of the allied army in the course of that evening and night; and every preparation was made for the action, which was expected on the plain of Vallesa on the morning of the 20th.

But shortly after day-light the enemy made another movement in several columns to his left, along the heights of the Guarena, which river he crossed below Canta la Piedra, and encamped last night at Babilafuente and Villamala; and the allied army made a correspondent movement to its right by Cantalpino, and encamped last night at Cabesa Vellosa, the 6th division, and Major-General Alten's brigade of cavalry, being upon the Tormes at Aldea Langua.

During these movements there have been occasional cannonades, but without loss on our side.

I have this morning moved the left of the army to the Tormes, where the whole are now concentrated; and I observe that the enemy have also moved towards the same river, near Huerta.

The enemy's object hitherto has been, to cut off my communication with Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo.

The enemy abandoned and destroyed the fort of Mirabete, on the Tagus, on the 11th instant; and the garrison marched to Madrid to form part of the army of the centre. They were reduced to five days provision.

I enclose a return of the killed and wounded on the 18th instant.

Flores de Avila, July 24.

My aid-de-camp, Capt. Lord Clinton, will present to your lordship this account of a victory which the allied troops under my command gained in a general action fought near Salamanca on the evening of the 22d instant, which I have been under the necessity of delaying to send till now, having been engaged ever since the action in the pursuit of the enemy's flying troops.

In my letter of the 21st I informed your lordship, that both armies were near the Tormes; and the enemy crossed that river with the greatest part of his troops in the afternoon by the fords between Alba de Tormes and Huerta, and moved by their left towards the roads leading to Ciudad Rodrigo.

The allied army, with the exception of the third division, and General D'Urban's cavalry, likewise crossed the Tormes in the evening by the bridge of Salamanca, and the fords in the neighbourhood; and I placed the troops in a position of which the right was upon one of the two heights called Des Arapiles, and the left on the Tormes below the ford of Santa Martha.

The third division and Brigadier-General D'Urban's cavalry were left at Cabrerizes, on the right of the Tormes, as the enemy had still a large corps on the heights above Babilafuente, on the same side of the river; and I considered it not improbable, that finding our army prepared for them in the morning, on the left of the Tormes, they would alter their plan and manœuvre by the other bank.

In the course of the night of the 21st, I received intelligence, of the truth of which I could not doubt, that General Chauvel had arrived at Pollos on the 20th, with the cavalry and horse artillery of the army of the north, to join Marshal Marmont; and I was quite certain that these troops would join him on the 22d or 23d at the latest.

During the night of the 21st, the enemy had taken possession of the village of Calvarasa de Ariba, and of the height near it, called Nuestra Senora de la Pena, our cavalry being in possession of Calvarasa de Abaxo; and shortly after day-light detachments from both armies attempted to obtain possession of the more distant from our right of the two hills called Dos Arapiles.

The enemy, however, succeeded, their detachment being the strongest, and having been concealed in the woods nearer the hill than we were, by which success they strengthened materially their own position, and had in their power increased means of annoying our's.

In the morning, the light troops of the 7th division, and the 4th caçadores belonging to General Pack's brigade, were engaged with the enemy on the height called Nuestra Senora de la Pena; on which height they maintained themselves with the enemy throughout the day. The possession by the ene-

my, however, of the more distant of the Arapiles, rendered it necessary for me to extend the right of the army in potence to the heights behind the village of Arapiles, and to occupy that village with light infantry; and here I placed the 4th division under the command of the Hon. Lieut. General Cole; and although, from the variety of the enemy's movements, it was difficult to form a satisfactory judgment of his intentions, I considered that, upon the whole, his objects were upon the left of the Tormes. I therefore ordered the honourable Major-General Pakenham, who commanded the 3d division in the absence of Lieut.-General Picton, on account of ill health, to move across the Tormes with the troops under his command, including Brigadier-General D'Urban's cavalry, and to place himself behind Aldea Tejada, Brigadier-General Bradford's brigade of Portuguese infantry, and Don Carlos D'Espana's infantry, having been moved up likewise to the neighbourhood of Las Torres, between the 3d and 4th division.

After a variety of evolutions and movements, the enemy appears to have determined upon his plan about two in the afternoon; and under cover of a very heavy cannonade, which, however, did us but very little damage, he extended his left, and moved forward his troops, apparently with an intention to embrace, by the position of his troops, and by his fire, our post on that of the two Arapiles which we possessed, and from thence to attack and break our line; or, at all events, to render difficult any movement of our's to our right.

The extension of his line to his left, however, and its advance upon our right, notwithstanding that his troops still occupied very strong ground, and his position was well defended by cannon, gave me an opportunity of attacking him, for which I had long been anxious. I reinforced our right with the 5th division, under Lieutenant-General Leith, which I placed behind the village of Arapiles, on the right of the 4th division; and with the 6th and 7th divisions in reserve; and as soon as these troops had taken their stations, I ordered the honourable Major-General Pakenham to move forward with the 3d division, and Gen. D'Urban's cavalry, and two squadrons of the 14th light dragoons, under Lieut. Colonel Hervey, in four columns, to turn the enemy's left on the heights; while Brigadier-Gen. Bradford's brigade, the 5th division, under Lieutenant-General Leith, the 4th division, under the honourable Lieut. General Cole, and the cavalry, under Lieut.-General Sir Stapleton Cotton, should attack them in front, supported in reserve by the 6th division, under Major-General Clinton, the 7th division, under Major-General Hope, and Don Carlos D'Espana's Spanish division, and Brigadier-General Pack, should support the left of the 4th division, by attacking that of the Dos Arapiles, which the enemy held. The 1st and light divisions occupied the ground on the left, and were in reserve.

The attack upon the enemy's left was made in the manner above described, and completely succeeded. Major-General the honourable Edward Pakenham formed the third division across the enemy's flank, and overthrew every thing opposed to him. These troops were supported in the most gallant style by the Portuguese cavalry under Brigadier-Gen. D'Urban, and Lieutenant-Colonel Hervey's squadrons of the 14th, who successfully defeated every attempt made by the enemy on the flank of the third division.

Brigadier-Gen. Bradford's brigade, the 5th and 4th divisions, and the cavalry under Lieut.-Gen. Sir Stapleton Cotton, attacked the enemy in front,

and drove his troops before them from one height to another, bringing forward their right, so as to acquire strength upon the enemy's flank, in proportion to the advance. Brigadier-General Pack made a very gallant attack upon the Arapiles, in which, however, he did not succeed, excepting in diverting the attention of the enemy's corps placed upon it, from the troops under the command of Lieutenant-General Cole, in his advance.

The cavalry under Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton made a most gallant and successful charge against a body of the enemy's infantry, which they overthrew and cut to pieces. In this charge Major-General Le Marchant was killed at the head of his brigade; and I have to regret the loss of a most noble officer.

After the crest of the height was carried, one division of the enemy's infantry made a stand against the 4th division, which, after a severe contest, was obliged to give way, in consequence of the enemy having thrown some troops on the left of the 4th division, after the failure of Brigadier-General Pack's attack upon the Arapiles, and the honourable Lieut.-General Cole having been wounded.

Marshal Sir William Beresford, who happened to be on the spot, directed Brigadier-General Spry's brigade, of the 5th division, which was in the second line, to change its front, and to bring its fire on the flank of the enemy's division; and, I am sorry to add, that while engaged in this service, he received a wound, which I am apprehensive will deprive me of the benefit of his counsel and assistance for some time. Nearly about the same time, Lieutenant-General Leith received a wound, which unfortunately obliged him to quit the field. I ordered up the 6th division, under Major-General Clinton, to relieve the 4th, and the battle was soon restored to its former success.

The enemy's right, however, reinforced by the troops which had fled from his left, and by those which had now retired from the Arapiles, still continued to resist; and I ordered the 1st and light divisions, and Colonel Stubbs's Portuguese brigade of the 4th division, which was re-formed, and Major-General William Anson's brigade, likewise of the 4th division, to turn the right, while the 6th division, supported by the 3d and 5th, attacked the front. It was dark before this point was carried by the 6th division, and the enemy fled through the woods towards the Tormes. I pursued them with the 1st and light divisions, and Major-General William Anson's brigade of the 4th division, and some squadrons of cavalry under Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton, as long as we could find any of them together, directing our march upon Huerta and the fords of the Tormes, by which the enemy had passed on their advance; but the darkness of the night was highly advantageous to the enemy, many of whom escaped under its cover, who must otherwise have been in our hands.

I am sorry to report, that owing to this same cause, Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton was unfortunately wounded by one of our own sentries, after he had halted.

We renewed the pursuit at break of day in the morning, with the same troops, and Major General Bock's and Major-General Anson's brigades of cavalry, which joined during the night; and having crossed the Tormes, we came up with the enemy's rear-guard of cavalry and infantry near La Serna; they were immediately attacked by the two brigades of dragoons, and the cavalry fled, leaving the infantry to their fate. I have never witnessed a more gallant

charge than was made on the enemy's infantry by the heavy brigade of the King's German legion, under Major-General Bock, which was completely successful, and the whole body of infantry, consisting of three battalions of the enemy's first division, were made prisoners.

The pursuit was afterwards continued as far as Penaranda last night; and our troops are still following the flying enemy. Their head-quarters were in this town, not less than ten leagues from the field of battle, for a few hours last night; and they are now considerably advanced on the road towards Valladolid by Arevalo. They were joined yesterday on their retreat by the cavalry and artillery of the army of the north, which have arrived at too late a period, it is to be hoped, to be of much use to them.

It is impossible to form a conjecture of the amount of the enemy's loss in this action; but from all reports it is very considerable. We have taken from them eleven pieces of cannon, several ammunition waggons, two eagles, and six colours; and one general, three colonels, three lieutenant-colonels, 130 officers of inferior rank, and between six and seven thousand soldiers are prisoners; and our detachments are sending in more every moment. The number of dead on the field is very large.

I am informed that Marshal Marmont is badly wounded, and has lost one of his arms; and that four general officers have been killed, and several wounded.

Such an advantage could not have been acquired without material loss on our side; but it certainly has not been of a magnitude to distress the army or to cripple its operations.

I have great pleasure in reporting to your lordship, that, throughout this trying day, of which I have related the events, I had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the general officers and troops.

The relation which I have written of its events will give a general idea of the share which each individual had in them; and I cannot say too much in praise of the conduct of every individual in his station.

I am much indebted to Marshal Sir Wm. Beresford for his friendly counsel and assistance, both previous to and during the action; to Lieutenant-Generals Sir Stapleton Cotton, Leith, and Cole, and Major-Generals Clinton, and the Hon. Edward Pakenham, for the manner in which they led the divisions of cavalry and infantry under their command respectively; to Major General Hulse, commanding a brigade in the sixth division; Major-General G. Anson, commanding a brigade of cavalry; Colonel Hinde; Colonel the Hon. Wm. Ponsonby, commanding Major-General Le Marchant's brigade, after the fall of that officer; to Major-General William Anson, commanding a brigade in the 4th division; Major-General Pringle, commanding a brigade in the 5th division, and the division after Lieutenant-General Leith was wounded; Brigadier-Gen. Bradford, Brigadier-General Spry, Colonel Stubbs, and Brigadier-General Power of the Portuguese service; likewise to Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell of the 94th, commanding a brigade in the 3d division; Lieut.-Colonel Williams, of the 60th foot; Lieut.-Colonel Wallace, of the 88th, commanding a brigade in the 3d division; Lieutenant-Colonel Ellis, of the 23d, commanding General the Hon. Edward Pakenham's brigade in the 4th division, during his absence in the command of the 3d division; the Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Greville, of the 38th regiment, commanding Major-General Hay's brigade in the 5th division, during his absence on leave; Brigadier-General Pack;

adier-General the Conde de Rezende, of the Portuguese service; Colonel Douglas, of the 8th Portuguese regiment; Lieut.-Colonel the Conde de Ficalho, of the same regiment; and Lieutenant-Colonel Bingham, of the 53d regiment; likewise to Brigadier-General d'Urban, and Lieut.-Colonel Hervey, of the 14th light dragoons; Colonel Lord Edward Somerset, commanding the 4th dragoons; and Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby, commanding the 12th light dragoons.

I must also mention Lieutenant-Colonel Woodford, commanding the light battalion of the brigade of guards, who, supported by two companies of the fusiliers, under the command of Captain Crowder, maintained the village of Arapiles against all the efforts of the enemy, previous to the attack upon their position by our troops.

In a case in which the conduct of all has been conspicuously good, I regret that the necessary limits of a dispatch prevent me from drawing your lordship's notice to the conduct of a larger number of individuals; but I can assure your lordship, that there was no officer of corps engaged in this action, who did not perform his duty by his sovereign and his country.

The royal and German artillery, under Lieutenant-Colonel Framingham, distinguished themselves by the accuracy of their fire wherever it was possible to use them; and they advanced to the attack of the enemy's position with the same gallantry as the other troops.

I am particularly indebted to Lieutenant-Colonel de Lansy, the deputy quarter-master general, the head of the department present in the absence of the quarter-master general, and to the officers of that department, and of the staff corps, for the assistance I received from them, particularly the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas, and Lieutenant Colonel Sturgeon of the latter, and Major Scovell of the former; and to Lieutenant-Colonel Waters, at present at the head of the adjutant general's department, and to the officers of that department, as well at head-quarters as with the several divisions of the army; and Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Fitzroy Somerset, and the officers of my personal staff. Among the latter I particularly request your lordship to draw the attention of his royal highness the prince regent to his serene highness the hereditary prince of Orange, whose conduct in the field, as well as upon every other occasion, entitles him to my highest commendation, and has acquired for him the respect and regard of the whole army.

I have had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Mariscal del Campo Don Carlos d'Espagna, and of Brigadier Don Julian Sanchez, and with that of their troops under their command respectively; and with that of the Mariscal del Campo Don Miguel Alava, and of Brigadier Don Joseph O'Lawler, employed with this army by the Spanish government, from whom, and from the Spanish authorities, and people in general, I received every assistance I could expect.

It is but justice likewise to draw your lordship's attention, upon this occasion, to the merits of the officers of the civil departments of the army. Notwithstanding the increased distance of our operations from our magazines, and that the country is completely exhausted, we have hitherto wanted nothing, owing to the diligence and attention of commissary-general Mr Bisset, and the officers of the department under his direction.

I have likewise to mention, that by the attention and ability of Doctor Mac Gregor, and of the officers of the department, under his charge our

wounded as well as those of the enemy left in our hands have been well taken care of; and I hope that many of these valuable men will be saved to the service.

Captain Lord Clinton will have the honour of laying at the feet of his royal highness the prince regent, the eagles and colours taken from the enemy in this action.

I inclose a return of the killed and wounded.

Abstract of Killed, Wounded, and Missing of the Allied Army, under the command of General the Earl of Wellington, in the Battle fought near Salamanca, on the 22d day of July, 1812.

	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.
British	388	2714	74
Portuguese	304	1552	182
Spanish	2	4	——
Total	694	4270	256

British Entry into Madrid.

London Gazette Extraordinary, Friday, Sept. 4.

Downing Street, Sept. 4.

Major Burgh, aid-de-camp to the Marquis of Wellington, has this day arrived at Lord Bathurst's office with dispatches, addressed to his lordship by Lord Wellington, dated Madrid, the 13th and 15th ultimo, of which the following are extracts:

Madrid, August 13.

Having found that the army under Marshal Marmont continued their retreat upon Burgos, in a state not likely to take the field again for some time, I determined to bring Joseph Buonaparte to a general action, or force him to quit Madrid.

Accordingly I moved from Cuellar on the 6th instant. We arrived at Segovia on the 7th, and at St Ildefonso on the 8th, where I halted one day, to allow the right of the army more time to come up.

No opposition was made to the passage of the troops through the mountains: and Brigadier-General D'Urban, with the Portuguese cavalry, and 1st light battalion of the King's German, and Captain M'Donald's troop of horse artillery, had been through the Guadarama pass since the 9th. He moved forward on the morning of the 11th from the neighbourhood of Galapagas, and supported by the heavy cavalry of the King's German Legion from Torrelodones, he drove in the French cavalry, about two thousand in number, and placed himself at Majalahonda, with the Portuguese cavalry and Captain M'Donald's troop, and the cavalry and light infantry of the King's German Legion at Las Royas, about three quarters of a mile distant.

The enemy's cavalry, which had been driven off in the morning, and had moved towards Naval Carnero, returned about five in the afternoon; and Brigadier-General D'Urban having formed the Portuguese cavalry in front of Majalahonda, supported by the horse artillery, ordered the cavalry to charge the enemy's leading squadrons, which appeared too far advanced to be supported by their main body. The Portuguese cavalry advanced to the attack, but unfortunately turned about before they reached the enemy; and they fled through the village of Majalahonda, and back upon the German dragoons, leaving behind them, unprotected and unsupported, those guns of Captain M'Donald's troop which had been moved forward to co-operate with the cavalry. By the activity of the officers and soldiers of Captain M'Donald's troop, the guns were, however, moved off; but owing to the unfavourable nature of the ground

over which they were moved, the carriage of one was broken, and two others were overturned; and these three guns fell into the enemy's hands.

The Portuguese dragoons having fled through Majalahonda, were rallied and re-formed upon the heavy dragoons of the King's German Legion, which were formed between that village and Las Rovas. The German cavalry charged the enemy, although under many disadvantages, and stopped their further progress; but I am sorry to say, that they suffered considerable loss, and that Colonel Jonqueires, who commanded the brigade, was taken prisoner. The left of the army was about two miles and a half distant, at the Puente de Ratamar, on the Guadarama river; and Colonel Ponsonby's brigade of cavalry, and a brigade of infantry of the 7th division, having moved forward to the support of the troops in advance, the enemy retired upon Majalahonda as soon as they observed these troops; and night having come on, they retired upon Alcorcon, leaving our guns at Majalahonda.

I am happy to report that the officers of the Portuguese cavalry behaved remarkably well, and shewed a good example to their men, particularly the Visconde de Barbacena, who was taken prisoner. The conduct of the brave German cavalry was, I understand, excellent, as was that of Captain M'Donald's troop of horse artillery. The light infantry battalion was not engaged.

The army moved forward yesterday morning, and its left took possession of the city of Madrid, Joseph Buonaparte having retired with the army of the centre by the roads of Toledo and Aranjuez, leaving a garrison in the Retiro.

It is impossible to describe the joy manifested by the inhabitants of Madrid upon our arrival; and I hope that the prevalence of the same sentiments of detestation of the French yoke, and of a strong desire to secure the independence of their country, which first induced them to set the example of resistance to the usurper, will induce them to make exertions in the cause of their country, which will be more efficacious than those formerly made.

I have not yet heard that Astorga has fallen; but the garrison which the enemy left in Tordesillas, about two hundred and sixty in number, surrendered to General Santocildes on the 5th instant.

I have received no further reports of the situation of General Ballasteros since the 21st of July. I have letters from General Joseph O'Donnell and General Roche, of the 26th July; and the army of Murcia, under the command of the former, was defeated by General D'Harispe on the 21st of July. It appears that the Spanish troops moved forward to attack General D'Harispe's posts at Castalla and at Ybi; those which attacked the former were repulsed with the loss of two thousand men and two pieces of cannon; those which attacked the latter, under the command of General Roche, conducted themselves remarkably well, and covered the retreat of the troops under General O'Donnel, and afterwards effected their own retreat, in good order, to Alicante.

Madrid, August 15.

I have the pleasure to inform your lordship, that the garrison of the Retiro surrendered by capitulation yesterday; and I have now the honour to enclose a translation of the capitulation.

We invested the place completely on the evening of the 13th; and in the night, detachments of the 7th division of infantry, under the command of Major-General Hope, and of the 3d division of infantry, under the command of Major-General the Honourable E. Pakenham, drove in the enemy's posts from the Prado and the Botanical Garden, and the works which they had

constructed outside of the park-wall; and having broken through the wall in different places, they were established in the palace of the Retiro, and close to the exterior of the enemy's works, enclosing the building called La China.

The troops were preparing in the morning to attack those works, preparatory to the arrangements to be adopted for the attack of the interior line and building, when the governor sent out an officer to desire to capitulate, and I granted him the honours of war, the baggage of the officers and soldiers of the garrison, &c. as specified in the enclosed agreement.

I enclose a return of the strength of the garrison, which marched out yesterday, at four o'clock, on their road to Ciudad Rodrigo. We have found in the place one hundred and eighty-nine pieces of brass ordnance, in excellent condition; nine hundred barrels of powder; twenty thousand stand of arms; and considerable magazines of clothing, provisions, and ammunition.

We have likewise found the eagles of the 13th and 51st regiments, which I forward to England, to be presented to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, by my aid-de-camp, Major Burgh.

I see, by a letter from General Ballasteros to Lieut-General Sir Rowland Hill of the 29th of July, that he had been in Malagà on the 14th of that month, after an engagement with General Laval, near Coin. General Ballasteros was at Grazelina on the 29th. I have a letter from Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill of the 8th inst.; and although General Drouet had been in movement for three days, it does not appear that his movements are of any importance.

I enclose returns of the killed, wounded, and missing, in the affair at Majalahonda, on the 11th instant, and of the loss in the attack of the works of the Retiro,

This dispatch will be delivered by my aid-de-camp Major Burgh, who will be able to explain any further circumstances relating to our situation; and I beg leave to recommend him to your lordship's protection.

P. S. Since writing this dispatch, I have received a letter of the 10th instant, from General Maitland, from Alicante, in which that officer informs me that he had on that day landed at that place.

TRANSLATION.

Capitulation proposed by General the Earl of Wellington, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Army, and accepted by Colonel La Fond, Commandant of the Fort of La China; 14th August, 1812.

Article 1.—The garrison shall march out of the fort with the honours of war, and shall lay down their arms on the glacis.

Art. 2.—The garrison, and persons of every description in the fort, shall be prisoners of war.

Art. 3.—The officers shall be allowed to retain their swords, their baggage, and their horses, according to the number allowed them by the regulations of the French army; and the soldiers shall keep their knapsacks.

Art. 4.—The magazines of the fort of every description, shall be delivered to the officers of the respective departments, and the French commandants of artillery and of engineers shall furnish lists of the contents of each depot. The plans of the fort shall also be delivered to the commanding officer of the British engineers.

Art. 5.—This capitulation shall take place at four o'clock in the afternoon, and the gates of the fort shall be

occupied by the troops of the allied army as soon as the capitulation is ratified.

Signed on the part of General the Earl of Wellington,

FITZROY SOMERSET,
Lieut. Col. and Mil. Sec.

Ratified. WELLINGTON.

Signed on the part of Colonel La Fond,

R. DE LA BRUNE.

This capitulation is ratified by the colonel commanding the Fort of La China.

(Signed) LA FOND.

Return of Prisoners of War, taken at the Fort de la China, in the Retiro, and in the Gene al Hospital la Atchd, on the 14th of August, 1812.

Staff—1 colonel, 2 captains, 2 subalterns, 7 staff, 3 civil officers, 16 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file.

Artillery—1 lieutenant-colonel, 8 captains, 10 subalterns, 355 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file, 46 horses and mules.

Engineers—1 lieutenant-colonel, 2 captains, 1 subaltern, 70 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file.

Detachments of several regiments of infantry; forming the garrison—1 colonel, 2 lieutenant-colonels, 9 captains, 19 subalterns, 1450 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file.

Independent garrison company—1 captain, 3 subalterns, 91 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file.

Total taken at the fort—2 colonels, 4 lieutenant colonels, 22 captains, 35 subalterns, 7 staff, 3 civil officers, 1982 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file, 46 horses and mules.

Staff—12 civil officers, 1 rank and file.

Sick and convalescents—1 captain, 5 subalterns, 4 civil officers, 428 serjeants, drummers, and rank and file.

Total taken at the general hospital —1 captain, 5 subalterns, 16 civil officers, 429 serjeants, drummers and rank and file.

General total taken 2506.

N. B. Besides the above number, 46 rank and file British, and 6 officers, and 144 rank and file, Spaniards, were retaken in the fort of La China.

JOHN WATERS,
Lieut.-Col. and A. A. G.

CAPTURE OF SEVILLE.

Supplement to the London Gazette of Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1812.

Downing-street, Sept. 23.

A dispatch, of which the following is a copy, has been this day received at Earl Bathurst's office, addressed to his lordship by Major-General Cooke, dated Cadiz, August 30, 1812:—

Cadiz, August 30.

My Lord,—Since my letter of yesterday's date, reporting the entry into Seville of the allied corps under General La Cruz, and Colonel Skerrett, I have received a dispatch from the latter, of which I transmit a copy herewith, and a return of the killed and wounded of the British detachment.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) GEO. COOKE,
Major-General.

Earl Bathurst, &c. &c.

Seville, August 28.

Sir,—I have the honour to report the movements of the detachment under my orders since the date of my last: the result of which,—the capture of the city of Seville by assault, defended by eight French battalions, and two regiments of dragoons, entrenched,—will, I trust, be considered as ho-

nourable to the allied arms and serviceable to the cause of Spain.

On the 24th instant, General Cruz Morgeon, commanding the Spanish troops, and myself, judged it advisable to make a forward movement on Seville; for this purpose it was advisable to force the enemy's corps of observation, of 350 cavalry and 200 infantry, at St Lucar-in Mayor. I marched from Manzanilla with 800 troops, composed of the 1st regiment of guards, the 87th, and the Portuguese regiment, Brigadier-General Downe, accompanied with 600 Spanish troops.

The Spanish column attacked on the right, and the British and Portuguese on the left. The French were driven through the streets with precipitation, leaving some killed, wounded, and prisoners. We took post at San Lucar without the loss of a man.

On the 26th instant, General Cruz and myself having judged that it would be attended with the most beneficial effects, both on the public opinion, and in saving the city from being plundered, if the French could be precipitated in their retreat from Seville, the allied troops, in consequence, marched for this purpose, and arrived at the heights of Castillejos de la Cuesta, immediately above Seville, on the morning of the 27th at six o'clock.

The Spanish troops formed our advance. The French advance was driven in, the cavalry retired, leaving the infantry in the plain, which last were charged by the Spanish cavalry, who made many prisoners.

The Spanish troops attacked a redoubt on our left, and lost a good many men. The columns advanced into the plain, by which movement this redoubt was turned, and its communication cut off; the Spanish troops under General Cruz took the right, and made a detour to arrive and attack on that flank of Triana (the suburbs of Seville). I ordered the redoubt to be masked by a detachment of the 20th Portuguese regiment, and advanced a field-piece with some troops, to keep in check the enemy's fire at one of the gates of the city, opposite to us; and after giving sufficient time for the Spanish column to arrive, the British and Portuguese troops advanced to the attack in front; the cavalry and artillery advanced at a gallop, supported by the grenadiers of the guards, and the infantry following.

The enemy abandoned the gate: we entered the suburbs, and advanced near to the bridge of Seville with as much rapidity as possible, in hopes of preventing its destruction, which would have rendered it extremely difficult for us to succeed. We were checked by fire of grape-shot and musketry at the turning of the street. The grenadiers of the guards advanced to our support, and drove every thing before them. At this moment part of the Spanish column arrived; we advanced to the bridge under a heavy fire; Captain Cadoux of the 95th, with great judgment, made a flank movement on our left; Captain Roberts, of the artillery, brought up with rapidity two guns; a heavy fire of cannon and musketry was soon brought to bear on the enemy, who were driven from their position on the other side of the river, and from the bridge, which they had only in part destroyed. The grenadiers of the guards, and some Spanish troops, led the columns that crossed the bridge; A general rout ensued, and the enemy were driven through the streets, which were strewed with their dead, and pursued at all points, leaving behind them valuable captures of horses, baggage, and money.

It is difficult for me to express the joy of the people of Seville. The inhabitants, under the fire of the French, brought planks to lay across the bridge; and their acclamations and vociferous marks of joy, added to the

immense crowd, rendered it extremely difficult for the officers to advance through the streets with their columns.

The vast extent of this city, the exhausted state of the troops who had advanced in double quick time for three miles, and the want of cavalry, rendered it impossible to continue the pursuit beyond the town. Such was the rapidity of our attack, that this victory over a French division, and the passage of a bridge which the enemy had materially destroyed, with his infantry and artillery, formed on the banks of the river, was achieved with a loss that appears almost incredible.

I have only to regret the loss of 1 officer, Lieutenant Brett, royal artillery, who was killed, gallantly fighting his gun, at the bridge. The intrepidity of this valuable officer was observed by the whole detachment.

The loss of the enemy must have been very great. We have taken several officers, and, I believe, near two hundred prisoners.

The conduct of every officer and soldier has been above praise; where all have behaved well, it is difficult to distinguish; I must, however, mention the detachment of the King's German Legion, commanded by Cornet Wieboldt; the artillery, by Captain Roberts; a detachment of the 95th, by Captain Cadoux; and the grenadiers of the 1st regiment of guards, by Captain Thomas. To Colonel Maitland, 1st regiment of guards, (second in command,) I am much indebted from the commencement of this service; and in the attack of Seville, his military talents, intrepidity, and zeal, were particularly conspicuous. I am also much indebted to Lieutenant-Colonel Colquit, commanding a detachment of the 1st regiment of guards; to Lieutenant-Colonel Prior, commanding a detachment 20th Portuguese regiment; and to Major Maclain, commanding a detachment 87th regiment.

The exertions of Captain Wynyard (Coldstream guards), assistant-adjutant-general, and Lieutenant Reid, royal staff corps, staff officers attached to the detachment, have been indefatigable. Captain Bunbury, 20th Portuguese regiment, brigade-major, and Lieutenant Smith, royal engineers, were at this time detached on other service.

During the whole of this attack, our allies, the Spaniards, have rivalled the conduct of the British and Portuguese troops; and Gen. Cruz Mourgeon, by his military talents and bravery, has principally contributed to the successful result of the day.

Enclosed is a return of the killed and wounded.

During last night a division of 7 or 8000 French troops passed by. Our attack has saved the city from the devastations and contributions with which it was threatened.

Captain Wynyard is the bearer of this dispatch, who will inform you of any further particulars you may require.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) J. B. SKERRETT.

To major Gen. Cooke, &c.

P. S. A return of the guns and military stores taken, will be sent as soon as the quantity can be ascertained. Two of the field-pieces which the enemy advanced against us fell into our hands.

Return of the killed and wounded of the troops under the command of Colonel Skerrett, at the capture of the city of Seville by assault, on the morning of the 27th of August, 1812.

Total—1 subaltern, 1 serjeant, 1 rank and file, 2 horses, killed; 1 subaltern, 12 rank and file, 1 horse, wounded.

(Signed)

W. CLINTON WYNYARD, A. A. General.

8

Surrender of Fort Detroit.

London Gazette Extraordinary, Tuesday, Oct. 6.

Downing-street, Oct. 6, 1812.

Captain Coore, Aide-de-camp to Lieut.-General Sir George Prevost, Governor in chief of his Majesty's provinces in North America, arrived this morning with dispatches from the Lieutenant-General addressed to Earl Bathurst, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, of which the following is an extract and a copy:—

Montreal, Aug. 26.

"My Lord,—I feel the greatest satisfaction in transmitting to your lordship a letter which I have this day received by express from Major-General Brock, announcing to me the surrender of Fort Detroit, on the 16th instant, by Brigadier-General Hull, with the army under his command, exceeding two thousand five hundred men, together with twenty-five pieces of ordnance.

In my dispatches of the 17th and 24th instant, I had the honour of detailing to your lordship the operations which had taken place in Upper Canada, in consequence of the invasion of that province by the army of the United States. Brigadier-Gen. Hull having crossed the Detroit river on the 12th of last month, with 2300 men, consisting of regular cavalry and infantry, and militia, bringing with him several field-pieces; and having dr[illegible] the militia towards Amherstb[illegible] first advanced to Sandwich, and afterwards approached Amherstburg, with a part of his army to the river Canard, about five miles from the fort, where he was foiled in three attempts to cross that river, and suffered a considerable loss. The garrison of Amherstburg consisted at that time of a subaltern's detachment of the royal artillery, commanded by Lieutenant Troughton; of a detachment of 300 men of the 41st regiment, under the command of Captain Muir; and of about as many of the militia; the whole under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Saint George, Inspecting Field Officer of militia in the district.

General Brock, relying upon the strong assurances I had given him, of a reinforcement as prompt and as effectual as the circumstances under which I was placed by this new war would permit me to send, adopted the most vigorous measures for the safety of that part of the frontier which had been wrecked. In these measures he was most opportunely aided by the fortunate surrender of Fort Michilimachinack, which giving spirit and confidence to the Indian tribes in its neighbourhood, part of whom assisted in its capture, determined them to advance upon the rear and flanks of the American army, as soon as they heard that it had entered the province.

The certainty of the expected reinforcements, and the weakness of the enemy on the Niagara frontier, had in the mean time induced General Brock to detach from the garrison of Fort George, 50 men of the 41st regiment, under Captain Chambers, into the interior of the country, for the purpose of collecting such of the Indians and militia as might be ready to join him, and of afterwards advancing upon the left flank of the enemy. Sixty men of the same regiment were also detached from that garrison to Amherstburg, and 40 to Long Point, to collect the militia in that quarter. Having made these dispositions, and having previously sent forward Colonel Proctor of the 41st regiment, to Amherstburg,—where he arrived and assumed the command on the 26th of last month—General Brock proceeded himself from York on the 5th instant, for Fort St George and Long Point on Lake

Erie, which last place he left on the 8th following for Amherstburg, with 40 rank and file of the 41st regiment, and 260 of the militia forces.

Whilst General Brock was thus hastening his preparations for the relief of Amherstburg, the prospects of the American army under General Hull, were becoming every day more unfavourable, and their situation more critical. The intelligence of the fall of Michilimachinack had reached them, which they knew must expose them to an attack of the Indians on one quarter, at the same time that they were threatened on another by the force approaching, under Captain Chambers. An Indian tribe of the Wyandots, whom they had in vain attempted to bribe, aided by a detachment of the 41st regiment from Amherstburg, had succeeded in cutting off their supplies on the opposite side of the river, and in intercepting their dispatches, which described in very strong terms their apprehensions and despondency. The losses they had sustained in their different actions upon the Canard river, as well as those for protecting their supplies, together with the mode of warfare pursued by the Indians, had greatly discouraged and dispirited them, and had convinced General Hull how hopeless any attempt would be to storm Fort Amherstburg, without great reinforcements and a battering train.

It was under these circumstances at this critical period, and when the enemy were beginning to consult their security by entrenching themselves, that General Brock entered Amherstburg, with a reinforcement, which he was fortunately enabled to do on the 12th instant, without the smallest molestation, in consequence of our decided naval superiority on the lakes. To his active and intelligent mind, the advantages which his enemy's situation afforded him over them, even with his very inferior force, became immediately apparent; and that he has not failed most effectually to avail himself of those favourable circumstances, your lordship will, I trust, be satisfied, from the letter which I have the honour of transmitting.

Having thus brought to your lordship's view the different circumstances which have led to the successful termination of the campaign on the western frontier of Upper Canada, I cannot withhold from Major-General Brock the tribute of applause so justly due to him for his distinguished conduct on this occasion, or omit to recommend him, through your lordship, to the favourable consideration of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, for the great ability and judgment with which he has planned, and the promptitude, energy, and fortitude, with which he has effected the preservation of Upper Canada, with the sacrifice of so little British blood in accomplishing so important a service.

My aid-de-camp, Captain Coore, will have the honour of delivering to your lordship this dispatch; and as he is well qualified to give your lordship information respecting the military resources of this command, I shall beg leave to refer your lordship to him for further particulars. I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE PREVOST.

Head quarters, Detroit, Aug. 16, 1812.

Sir,—I hasten to apprize your excellency of the capture of this very important post. Two thousand five hundred troops have this day surrendered prisoners of war, and about 25 pieces of ordnance have been taken, without the sacrifice of a drop of British blood. I had not more than seven hundred troops including militia, and about six hundred Indians, to accomplish this service. When I detail my good fortune,

your excellency will be astonished. I have been admirably supported by Colonel Proctor, the whole of my staff, and I may justly say every individual under my command. Believe me, &c.

(Signed)

ISSAC BROCK, Major-General.

To his Excellency Lieut.-Gen.
Sir George Prevost, Bart.

Head-quarters, Montreal,
Sept. 1, 1812.

My Lord,—Since I had the honour of transmitting to your lordship my letter of the 26th ult. in charge of my aid-de-camp Captain Coore, I have received from Major-General Brock a dispatch, of which the enclosed is a copy, containing the particulars of Brigadier-General Hull's invasion of Upper Canada, which has terminated most gloriously to his majesty's arms, in that officer's defeat and surrender, as a prisoner of war, the whole of the north-western army, together with the Fort Detroit, and 33 pieces of ordnance. I forward this dispatch express, in the expectation of its reaching Captain Coore, previously to his leaving Canada, which, with the colours of the 4th United States' regiment accompanying it, I trust that officer will have the honour of delivering to your lordship. I have the honour to be, &c.

GEORGE PREVOST.

To the Right Hon. Earl Bathurst.

Head quarters, Detroit,
Aug. 17.

Sir,—I have had the honour of informing your excellency, that the enemy effected his passage across the Detroit river on the 12th ult. without opposition, and that after establishing himself at Sandwich, he had ravaged the country as far as the Moravia town. Some skirmishes occurred between the troops under Lieutenant-Colonel St George and the enemy upon the river Canard, which uniformly terminated in his being repulsed with loss. I judged it proper to detach a force down the river Thames, capable of acting in conjunction with the garrison of Amherstburg offensively; but Captain Chambers, whom I had appointed to direct this detachment, experienced difficulties that frustrated my intentions. The intelligence received from that quarter admitting of no delay, Colonel Proctor was directed to assume the command, and his force was soon after increased with 60 rank and file of the 41st regiment.

In the mean time, the most strenuous measures were adopted to counteract the machinations of the evil-disposed; and I soon experienced the gratification of receiving voluntary offers of service from that portion of the embodied militia the most easily collected. In the attainment of this important point, gentlemen of the first character and influence shewed an example highly creditable to them: and I cannot on this occasion avoid mentioning the essential assistance I derived from John M'Donell, Esq. his Majesty's Attorney-General, who, from the beginning of the war, has honoured me with his services as my provincial aid-de-camp. A sufficiency of boats being collected at Long Point for the conveyance of three hundred men, the embarkation took place on the 8th instant, and in five days arrived in safety at Amherstburg. I found that the judicious arrangement, which had been adopted immediately upon the arrival of Colonel Proctor, had compelled the enemy to retreat, and take shelter under the guns of his fort: that officer commenced operations by sending strong detachments across the river, with a view of cutting off the enemy's communication with his reserve. This produced two smart skirmishes on the 5th and 9th instant, in both of which the enemy's loss was very considerable, whilst ours amounted to three killed,

and thirteen wounded; amongst the latter I have particularly to regret, Captain Muir and Lieutenant Sutherland, of the 41st regiment; the former an officer of great experience, and both ardent in his majesty's service. Batteries had likewise been commenced opposite Fort Detroit, for one eighteen-pounder, two twelve, and two five and a half inch mortars; all of which opened on the evening of the 15th (having previously summoned Brigadier-General Hull to surrender); and although opposed by a well-directed fire from seven twenty-four pounders, such was their construction under the able directions of Captain Dixon of the royal engineers, that no injury was sustained from its effect.

The force at my disposal being collected in the course of the 15th, in the neighbourhood of Sandwich, the embarkation took place a little after daylight on the following morning, and by the able arrangements of Lieut. Dewar of the quarter-master-general's department, the whole was, in a short time, landed without the smallest confusion at Spring Well, a good position, three miles west of Detroit. The Indians, who had in the mean time effected their landing two miles below, moved forwards and occupied the woods, about a mile and an half on our left.

The force which I instantly directed to march against the enemy, consisted of 30 royal artillery, 250 41st regiment, 50 royal Newfoundland regiment, 400 militia, and about 600 Indians, to which were attached three six-pounders and two three-pounders. The services of Lieutenant Troughton, commanding the royal artillery, an active and intelligent officer, being required in the field, the direction of the batteries was intrusted to Captain Hall, and the marine department; and I cannot withhold my entire approbation of their conduct on this occasion.

I crossed the river with an intention of waiting in a strong position the effect of our force upon the enemy's camp, and in the hope of compelling him to meet us in the field; but receiving information upon landing, that Colonel M'Arthur, an officer of high reputation, had left the garrison three days before with a detachment of five hundred men, and hearing soon afterwards that his cavalry had been seen that morning three miles in our rear, I decided on an immediate attack. Accordingly the troops advanced to within one mile of the fort, and having ascertained that the enemy had taken little or no precaution towards the land-side, I resolved on an assault, whilst the Indians penetrated his camp. Brigadier-General Hull, however, prevented this movement, by proposing a cessation of hostilities, for the purpose of proposing terms of capitulation. Lieut.-Colonel John M'Donnell and Captain Glegg were accordingly deputed by me on this mission, and returned within an hour with the conditions which I have the honour herewith to transmit. Certain considerations afterwards induced me to agree to the two supplementary articles.

The force thus surrendered to his majesty's arms cannot be estimated at less than 2500 men. In this estimate, Colonel M'Arthur's detachment is included, as he surrendered, agreeably to the terms of capitulation, in the course of the evening, with the exception of 200 men, whom he left escorting a valuable convoy at some little distance in his rear; but there can be no doubt the officer commanding will consider himself equally bound by the capitulation.

The enemy's aggregate force was divided into two troops of cavalry; one company of artillery, regulars; the 4th United States regiment; detachments of the 1st and 3d United

States regiments, volunteers; three regiments of the Ohio militia; one regiment of the Michigan territory.

Thirty-three pieces of brass and iron ordnance have already been secured.

When this contest commenced, many of the Indian nations were engaged in active warfare with the United States, notwithstanding the constant endeavours of this government to dissuade them from it. Some of the principal chiefs happened to be at Amherstburg, trying to procure a supply of arms and ammunition, which for years had been withheld, agreeably to the instructions received from Sir James Craig, and since repeated by your excellency.

From that moment they took a most active part, and appeared foremost on every occasion; they were led yesterday by Col. Elliott and Capt. M'Kee, and nothing could exceed their order and steadiness. A few prisoners were taken by them, during the advance, whom they treated with every humanity; and it affords me much pleasure in assuring your excellency, that such was their forbearance and attention to what was required of them, that the enemy sustained no other loss in men than what was occasioned by the fire of our batteries.

The high sense I entertain of the abilities and judgment of Lieut.-Col. Myers, induced me to appoint him to the important command at Niagara: it was with reluctance I deprived myself of his assistance, but had no other expedient. His duties as head of the Quarter-master-General's department were performed to my satisfaction by Lieutenant-Colonel Nicholls, Quarter-master-General of the militia.

Captain Glegg, my aide-de-camp, will have the honour of delivering this dispatch to your excellency; he is charged with the colours taken at the capture of Fort Detroit, and those of the 4th United States regiment.

Captain Glegg is capable of giving your excellency every information respecting the state of this province; and I shall esteem myself highly indebted to your excellency to afford him that protection to which his merit and length of service give him a powerful claim.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) ISAAC BROCK,
Major-General.

P. S. I have the honour to inclose a copy of a proclamation, which I issued immediately on taking possession of this country.

I should have mentioned in the body of my dispatch the capture of the Adams; she is a fine vessel, and recently repaired, but without arms.

Camp at Detroit, August 16, 1812.

Capitulation for the surrender of Fort Detroit, entered into between Major-General Brock, commanding his Britannic Majesty's forces, on the one part, and Brigadier-General Hull, commanding the North Western army of the United States, on the other part.

Art. I. Fort Detroit, with all the troops, regulars as well as militia, will be immediately surrendered to the British forces under the command of the Major-General Brock, and will be considered prisoners of war, with the exception of such of the militia of the Michigan territory who have not joined the army.

II. All public stores, arms, and all public documents, including every thing else of a public nature, will be immediately given up.

III. Private persons and property of every description will be respected.

IV. His excellency Brigadier General Hull, having expressed a desire that a detachment from the state of Ohio, on its way to join his army, as well as one sent from Fort Detroit,

under the command of Colonel M'Arthur, should be included in the capitulation, it is accordingly agreed to. It is, however, to be understood, that such part of the Ohio militia as have not joined the army, will be permitted to return to their homes, on condition that they will not serve during the war; their arms will be delivered up, if belonging to the public.

V. The garrison will march out at the hour of twelve this day, and the British forces will take immediate possession of the fort.

(Signed) J. MACDONELL, Lieut. Col. militia, P. A. D. C.
J. B. GLEGG, Major A. D. C.
JAMES MILLER, Lieut. Col. 5th U. S. infantry.
E. BRUSH, Col. commanding 1st regiment of Michigan militia.

Approved,
W. HULL, Brigadier-Gen. commanding the N. W. Army.

Approved,
ISAAC BROCK, Major-Gen.

An article supplementary to the articles of capitulation, concluded at Detroit, the 16th of August, 1812.

It is agreed, that the officers and soldiers of the Ohio militia and volunteers shall be permitted to proceed to their respective homes, on this condition, that they do not serve during the present war, unless they are exchanged.

(Signed) W. HULL, Brig. Gen. commanding U. S. N. W. Army.
ISAAC BROCK, Major-General.

An article in addition to the supplementary article of capitulation, concluded at Detroit, August 16th, 1812.

It is further agreed, that the officers and soldiers of the Michigan militia and volunteers, under the command of Major Wetherall, shall be placed on the same principles as the Ohio militia and volunteers are placed by the supplementary article of the 18th instant.

(Signed) W. HULL, Brig.-Gen. commanding N. W. Army U. S.
ISAAC BROCK, Major-General.

Return of ordnance taken in the Fort and Batteries at Detroit, August 16th, 1812.

Iron ordnance——9 twenty-four pounders, 8 twelve pounders, 5 nine-pounders, 3 six-pounders.

Brass ordnance—3 six pounders, 2 four-pounders, 1 three-pounder, 1 eight inch howitzer, 1 five and half inch ditto.

Total of ordnance taken—33.

FELIX TROUGHTON, Lt.-Com. Royal Artillery.

N. B. No time to take an inventory of ordnance stores, &c. and no return could be procured from the American officer.

Proclamation by Isaac Brock, Esq. Major-General, commanding his majesty's forces in the province of Upper Canada, &c.

Whereas the territory of Michigan was this day by capitulation ceded to the arms of his Britannic majesty, without any other condition than the protection of private property; and wishing to give an early proof of the moderation and justice of his majesty's government, I do hereby announce to all the inhabitants of the said territory, that the laws heretofore in existence

shall continue in force until his majesty's pleasure be known, or so long as the peace and safety of the said territory will admit thereof; and I do hereby also declare, and make known to the said inhabitants, that they shall be protected in the full exercise and enjoyment of their religion, of which all persons, both civil and military, will take notice, and govern themselves accordingly.

All persons having in their possession, or having any knowledge of any public property, shall forthwith deliver in the same, or give notice thereof to the officer commanding, or Lieutenant-Colonel Nicholl, who are duly authorised to receive and give proper receipts for the same.

Officers of militia will be held responsible that all arms in possession of militia men be immediately delivered up, and all individuals whatever who have in their possession arms of any kind will deliver them up without delay.

Given under my hand, at Detroit, this 16th day of August, 1812, and in the 52d year of his majesty's reign.

(Signed) ISAAC BROCK,
Major-General.

LOSS OF THE GUERRIERE, &c.

From the London Gazette, Saturday, Oct. 10.

Admiralty-Office, Oct. 10.

Copy of a letter from Vice-Admiral Sawyer to John Wilson Croker, Esq. dated on board his majesty's ship Africa, at Halifax, Sept 15, 1812.

Sir,—It is with extreme concern I have to request you will be pleased to lay before the lords commissioners of the Admiralty the inclosed copy of a letter from Captain Dacres, of his majesty's late ship Guerriere, giving an account of his having sustained a close action of near two hours on the 19th ult. with the American frigate, Constitution, of very superior force, both in guns and men, (of the latter almost double) when the Guerriere being totally dismasted, she rolled so deep as to render all further efforts at the guns unavailing, and it became a duty to spare the lives of the remaining part of her valuable crew, by hauling down her colours. The masts fell over the side from which she was about to be engaged, in a very favourable position for raking by the enemy. A few hours after she was in possession of the enemy, it was found impossible to keep her above water; she was therefore set fire to and abandoned, which I hope will satisfy their lordships she was defended to the last. Captain Dacres has fully detailed the particulars of the action, as well as the very gallant conduct of, and the support he received from, the whole of his officers and ship's company, and I am happy to hear he is, with the rest of the wounded, doing well: they have been treated with the greatest humanity and kindness, and an exchange having been agreed on, I am in daily expectation of their arrival here. A list of the killed and wounded is herewith sent, which, I regret to say, is very large. I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) H. SAWYER, VICE-ADM.

Boston, Sept. 7, 1812.

Sir,—I am sorry to inform you of the capture of his majesty's late ship Guerriere by the American frigate Constitution, after a severe action on the 19th of August, in lat. 40 deg. 20 min. N. and long. 55 deg. W. At two p. m. being by the wind on the starboard tack, we saw a sail on our weather beam, bearing down on us. At three made her out to be a man of war, beat to quarters, and prepared for action. At four, she closing fast, wore to prevent her raking us. At ten

minutes past four, hoisted our colours and fired several shot at her. At twenty minutes past four, she hoisted her colours, and returned our fire, wore several times to avoid being raked, exchanging broadsides. At five, she closed on our starboard beam, both keeping up a heavy fire, and steering free, his intention being evidently to cross our bow. At twenty minutes past five our mizen mast went over the starboard quarter, and brought the ship up in the wind; the enemy then placed himself on our larboard bow, raking us, a few only of our bow guns bearing, and his grape and riflemen sweeping our deck. At forty minutes past, the ship not answering helm, he attempted to lay us on board; at this time Mr Grant, who commanded the forecastle, was carried below, badly wounded. I immediately ordered the marines and boarders from the main deck; the master was at this time shot through the knee, and I received a severe wound in the back. Lieutenant Kent was leading on the boarders, when the ship coming to, we brought some of our bow guns to bear on her, and had got clear of our opponent, when at twenty minutes past six, our fore and main-masts went over the side, leaving the ship a perfect unmanageable wreck. The frigate shooting ahead, I was in hopes to clear the wreck and get the ship under command to renew the action; but just as we had cleared the wreck, our spritsail yard went, and the enemy having rove new braces, &c. wore round within pistol shot, to rake us, the ship laying in the trough of the sea, and rolling, her main-deck guns under water, and all attempts to get her before the wind being fruitless; when calling my few remaining officers together, they were all of opinion that any further resistance would only be a needless waste of lives, I ordered, though reluctantly, the colours to be struck." The loss of the ship is to be ascribed to the early fall of the mizenmast, which enabled our opponent to choose his position. I am sorry to say we suffered severely in killed and wounded, and mostly whilst she lay on our beam, from her grape and musketry, in all 15 killed and 63 wounded, many of them severely; none of the wounded officers quitted the deck till the firing ceased. The frigate proved to be the United States ship Constitution, of thirty twenty-four pounders on her main-deck, and twenty-four thirty-two pounders, and two eighteen pounders on her upper deck, and 476 men; her loss, in comparison with ours, is trifling, about 20, the first lieutenant of marines and eight killed, and first lieutenant and master of the ship, and 11 men wounded, her low masts badly wounded, and stern much shattered, and very much cut up about the rigging. The Guerriere was so cut up that all attempts to get her in would have been useless. As soon as the wounded were got out of her, they set her on fire; and I feel it my duty to state, that the conduct of Captain Hull and his officers to our men has been that of a brave enemy, the greatest care being taken to prevent our men losing the smallest trifle, and the greatest attention being paid to the wounded, who, through the attention and skill of Mr Irvine, surgeon, I hope will do well. I hope, though success has not crowned our efforts, you will not think it presumptuous in me to say, the greatest credit is due to the officers and ship's company for their exertions, particularly when exposed to the heavy raking fire of the enemy; I feel particularly obliged for the exertions of Lieut. Kent, who though wounded early by a splinter, continued to assist me; in the second Lieutenant the service has suffered a severe loss; Mr Scott, the master, though wounded, was particularly attentive, and used every exertion in

clearing the wreck, as did the warrant officers. Lieutenant Nicholl, of the royal marines, and his party, supported the honourable character of their corps, and they suffered severely. I must recommend Mr Snow, master's mate, who commanded the foremost main-deck guns, in the absence of Lieutenant Pullman, and the whole after the fall of Lieutenant Ready, to your protection, he having received a severe contusion from a splinter. I must point out Mr Garby, acting purser, to your notice, who volunteered his services on deck, and commanded the after quarter-deck guns, and was particularly active, as well as Mr Bannister, midshipman. I hope, in considering the circumstances, you will think the ship entrusted to my charge was properly defended; the unfortunate loss of our masts, the absence of the third lieutenant, second lieutenant of marines, three midshipmen, and 24 men, considerably weakened our crew, and we only mustered at quarters 244 men and 19 boys, on coming into action; the enemy had such an advantage from his marines and riflemen, when close, and his superior sailing enabled him to choose his distance. I inclose herewith a list of killed and wounded on board the Guerriere, and have the honour to be, &c.

JAMES R. DACRES.

15 killed, 63 wounded.—Total 78.

(Signed) JAMES R. DACRES.
JOHN IRVINE, Surgeon.

Admiralty-Office, Dec. 26.

Copy of a letter from Admiral the Right Hon. Sir John Borlase Warren, Bart. K. B. commander in chief of his majesty's ships and vessels on the North American station, to John Wilson Croker, Esq. dated at Halifax, Nov. 18, 1812.

Sir,—I beg leave to transmit copies of letters from Captain Whinyates and Capt. Sir John Beresford: the former giving an account of the capture of his majesty's brig Frolic, by the American sloop of war Wasp, after a hard-contested action; and the latter acquainting me with the recapture of the Frolic, and of his having at the same time taken the Wasp, both of which were conducted to Bermuda by the Poictiers; from whence I shall send further particulars for their lordships' information the moment I can learn them.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) J. B. WARREN.

His Majesty's ship Poictiers, at sea, October 23.

Sir,—It is with the most bitter sorrow and distress I have to report to your excellency the capture of his majesty's brig Frolic, by the ship Wasp, belonging to the United States of America, on the 18th instant. Having under convoy the homeward-bound trade from the Bay of Honduras, and being in latitude 36 deg. N and 64 deg. W. on the night of the 17th, we were overtaken by a most violent gale of wind, in which the Frolic carried away her main-yard, lost her topsails, and sprung the main topmast. On the morning of the 18th, as we were repairing the damages sustained in the storm, and reassembling the scattered ships, a suspicious ship came in sight, and gave chace to the convoy. The merchant ships continued their voyage before the wind under all sail; the Frolic dropped astern, and hoisted Spanish colours, in order to decoy the stranger under her guns, and to give time for the convoy to escape. About ten o'clock, both vessels being within hail, we hauled to the wind, and the battle began. The superior fire of our guns gave every reason to expect its speedy termination in our favour, but the gaff head-braces being shot away, and there being no sail on the main-mast, the brig became unmanageable, and the enemy succeed-

ed in taking a position to rake her, while she was unable to bring a gun to bear. After laying some time exposed to a most destructive fire, she fell with the bowsprit betwixt the enemy's main and mizen rigging, still unable to return his fire. At length the enemy boarded, and made himself master of the brig, every individual officer being wounded, and the greater part of the men either killed or wounded, there not being 20 persons remaining unhurt. Although I shall ever deplore the unhappy issue of this contest, it would be great injustice to the merits of the officers and crew if I failed to report that their bravery and coolness are deserving of every praise; and I am convinced, if the Frolic had not been crippled in the gale, I should have to make a very different report to your excellency. The Wasp was taken, and the Frolic recaptured the same afternoon, by his majesty's ship the Poictiers. Being separated from them, I cannot transmit at present a list of killed and wounded. Mr Chas. M'Kay, the first lieutenant, and Mr Stephens, the master, have died of their wounds.

I have the honour to be, &c.

T. WHINYATES.

To the Right Hon. Sir J. B. Warren, Bart. &c.

His Majesty's ship Poictiers, at sea, October 18.

Sir,—I have the honour to acquaint you, that his majesty's ship under my command has this day captured the American sloop of war Wasp, of 20 guns, Capt. Jacob Jones, and retaken his majesty's brig Frolic, Capt. Whinyates, which she had captured, after an action of 50 minutes. I have thought it my duty to collect the Frolic's convoy, and to see them in safety to Bermuda. The conduct of Capt. Whinyates, who, I regret to say, is wounded, and of his crew, appears to have decidedly gallant, that I have been induced to continue him in command of the Frolic, until your pleasure is known.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) J. P. BERESFORD.

Admiral Sir J. B. Warren, Bart. K.B. Commander-in-chief, &c.

London Gazette Extraordinary, Friday, Nov. 27.

COLONIAL DEPARTMENT.

Downing-Street, Nov. 27.

Capt. Fulton, aid-de-camp to Lieutenant-General Sir G. Prevost, arrived late last night, with a dispatch from that officer, addressed to Earl Bathurst, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, of which the following is a copy:—

Head quarters, Montreal, October 21, 1812.

My Lord,—I have the satisfaction of reporting to your lordship, that his majesty's forces, aided by the militia and Indians stationed on the Niagara frontier, have completely repelled a second attempt of the enemy to invade Upper Canada, and that a victory has been gained which has left in our possession nine hundred of the American army, and their commander, Brigadier-General Wadsworth, who surrendered himself on the field of battle to Major-General Sheaffe. His majesty and the country have to deplore the loss of an able and most gallant officer in Major-General Brock, who fell early in the battle, at the head of the flank companies of the 49th regiment, while nobly encouraging them to sustain their position, in opposition to an infinitely superior force, until the reinforcements he had ordered to their support should arrive. For further particulars of this splendid affair, I beg leave to refer your lordship to Major-General Sheaffe's report, herewith transmitted. I also

transmit a general order I have just issued to the forces in the British American provinces on the occasion of this important success, as it contains a statement of the services rendered by all who had the good fortune to maintain on that day the fame of his majesty's arms, and to convince our deluded neighbours, that their superiority of numbers cannot intimidate his majesty's army, nor shake the fidelity of his Canadian subjects.

Not having received the return of the killed and wounded on the 13th, nor that of the ordnance and stores captured from the enemy, I am under the necessity of deferring sending them to your lordship until the next opportunity, when I also expect to forward the colours taken from the Americans, to be laid at the feet of his royal highness the Prince Regent.

Capt. Fulton, my aid-de-camp, will have the honour of delivering this dispatch to your lordship. He is very capable of affording such information as your lordship may require respecting the state of his majesty's Canadian provinces.

Eight companies of the Glengary levy are in motion to reinforce Upper Canada.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) George Prevost,
Commander of the Forces.

Fort George, October 13.

Sir,—I have the honour of informing your excellency, that the enemy made an attack with a considerable force this morning before daylight, on the position of Queenstown. On receiving intelligence of it, Major-Gen. Brock immediately proceeded to that post, and I am excessively grieved in having to add, that he fell whilst gallantly cheering his troops to an exertion for maintaining it. With him the position was lost; but the enemy was not allowed to retain it long. Reinforcements having been sent up from this post, composed of regular troops, militia, and Indians, a movement was made to turn his left, while some artillery, under the able direction of Capt. Holcroft, supported by a body of infantry, engaged his attention in front. This operation was aided, too, by the judicious position which Norton, and the Indians with him, had taken on the woody brow of the high ground above Queenstown. A communication being thus opened with Chipawa, a junction was formed with succours that had been ordered from that post. The enemy was then attacked, and after a short but spirited conflict, was completely defeated. I had the satisfaction of receiving the sword of their commander, Brigadier-General Wadsworth, on the field of battle; and many officers, with upwards of 900 men, were made prisoners, and more may yet be expected. A stand of colours and one six-pounder were also taken. The action did not terminate till nearly 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and their loss in killed and wounded must have been considerable. Our's I believe to have been comparatively small in numbers; no officer was killed besides Major-General Brock, one of the most gallant and zealous officers in his majesty's service, whose loss cannot be too much deplored, and Lieut.-Colonel M'Donnell, provincial aid-de-camp, whose gallantry and merit rendered him worthy of his chief.

Captains Dennis and Williams, commanding the flank companies of the 49th regiment, which were stationed at Queenstown, were wounded, bravely contending at the head of their men against superior numbers; but I am glad to have it in my power to add, that Captain Dennis fortunately was able to keep the field, though with pain and difficulty: and Captain Williams's wound is not likely to deprive me long of his services.

I am particularly indebted to Captain Holcroft, of the royal artillery, for his judicious and skilful co-operation with the guns and howitzers under his immediate superintendance, the well-directed fire from which contributed materially to the fortunate result of the day.

Captain Derenzy, of the 41st regiment, brought up the reinforcement of that corps from Fort George; and Captain Bullock led that of the same regiment from Chipawa; and under their command those detachments acquitted themselves in such a manner as to sustain the reputation which the 41st regiment had already acquired in the vicinity of Detroit.

Major-General Brock, soon after his arrival at Queenstown, had sent down orders for battering the American Fort Niagara; Brigade Major Evans, who was left in charge of Fort George, directed the operations against it with so much effect as to silence its fire, and to force the troops to abandon it; and by his prudent precautions he prevented mischief of a most serious nature, which otherwise might have been effected, the enemy having used heated shot in firing at Fort George. In these services he was most effectually aided by Colonel Claus (who remained in the fort at my desire), and by Captain Vigoreaux, of the royal engineers. Brigade Major Evans also mentions the conduct of Captains Powell and Cameron, of the militia artillery, in terms of commendation.

Lieutenant Crowther, of the 41st regiment, had charge of two 3-pounders that had accompanied the movement of our little corps, and they were employed with very good effect.

Capt. Gleg, of the 49th regiment, aid-de-camp to our lamented friend and general, afforded me most essential assistance; and I found the services of Lieutenant Fowler, of the 41st regiment, assistant deputy quarter-master-general, very useful. I derived much aid, too, from the activity and intelligence of Lieut. Kerr, of the Glengary fencibles, whom I employed in communications with the Indians, and other flanking parties.

I was unfortunately deprived of the aid of the experience and ability of Lieut.-Colonel Myers, deputy quarter-master-general, who had been sent up to Fort Erie a few days before, on duty which detained him there.

Lieut.-Colonels Butler and Clark, of the militia, and Captains Hatt, Durand, Rowe, Applegarth, Jas. Crooks, Cooper, Robert Hamilton, M'Ewen, and Duncan Cameron, and Lieutenants Richardson and Thomas Butler, commanding flank companies of the Lincoln and York militia, led their men into action with great spirit. Major Merritt, commanding the Niagara dragoons, accompanied me, and gave me much assistance with part of his corps. Captain A. Hamilton, belonging to it, was disabled from riding, and attached himself to the guns under Capt. Holcroft, who speaks highly of his activity and usefulness. I beg leave to add, that Volunteers Shaw, Thomson, and Jarvis, attached to the flank companies of the 49th regiment, conducted themselves with great spirit; the first was wounded and the last taken prisoner: I beg leave to recommend these young men to your excellency's notice. Norton is wounded, but not badly: he and the Indians particularly distinguished themselves; and I have very great satisfaction in assuring your excellency, that the spirit and good conduct of his majesty's troops, of the militia, and of the other provincial corps, were eminently conspicuous on this occasion.

I have not been able to ascertain yet the number of our troops, or of those of the enemy engaged: our's, I believe, did not exceed the number of the prisoners we have taken; and their advance, which effected a landing, pro-

bably amounted to thirteen or fourteen hundred.

I shall do myself the honour of transmitting to your excellency further details when I shall have received the several reports of the occurrences which did not pass under my own observation, with the return of the casualties, and those of the killed and wounded, and of the ordnance taken.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) R. H. SHEAFFE,
Major-General.

To his excellency Sir George
Prevost, Bart. &c.

LOSS OF THE MACEDONIAN.

Admiralty-Office, Dec. 29.

Copy of a letter from Captain John Surman Carden, late commander of his majesty's ship the Macedonian, to John Wilson Croker, Esq. dated on board the American ship United States, at sea, the 28th October, 1812.

Sir,—It is with the deepest regret I have to acquaint you, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that his majesty's late ship Macedonian was captured on the 25th instant by the United States' ship United States, Commodore Decatur commander. The detail is as follows:

A short time after daylight, steering N.W. by W. with the wind from the southward, in lat. 29 deg. N. and long. 29 deg. 30 min. W. in the execution of their lordships' orders, a sail was seen on the lee beam, which I immediately stood for, and made her out to be a large frigate under American colours: at nine o'clock I closed with her, and she commenced the action, which we returned; but from the enemy keeping two points off the wind, I was not enabled to get as close to her as I could have wished. After an hour's action, the enemy backed and came to the wind, and I was then enabled to bring her to close battle; in this situation I soon found the enemy's force too superior to expect success, unless some very fortunate chance occurred in our favour; and with this hope I continued the battle to two hours and ten minutes, when, having the mizen-mast shot away by the board, topmasts shot away by the caps, main-yard shot in pieces, lower masts badly wounded, lower rigging all cut to pieces, a small proportion only of the fore-sail left to the fore-yard, all the guns on the quarter-deck and forecastle disabled but two, and filled with wreck, two also on the main-deck disabled, and several shot between wind and water, a very great proportion of the crew killed and wounded, and the enemy comparatively in good order, who had now shot a-head, and was about to place himself in a raking position, without our being enabled to return the fire, being a perfect wreck, and unmanageable log; I deemed it prudent, though a painful extremity, to surrender his majesty's ship; nor was this dreadful alternative resorted to till every hope of success was removed even beyond the reach of chance, nor till, I trust, their lordships will be aware every effort had been made against the enemy by myself, my brave officers, and men; nor should she have been surrendered whilst a man lived on board, had she been manageable. I am sorry to say, our loss is very severe. I find by this day's muster, thirty-six killed, three of whom lingered a short time after the battle; thirty-six severely wounded, many of whom cannot recover; and thirty-two slightly wounded, who may all do well:—total, one hundred and four.

The truly noble and animating conduct of my officers and the steady bravery of my crew; to the last moment of the battle, must ever render them dear to their country.

My first lieutenant, David Hope, was severely wounded in the head towards the close of the battle, and taken below; but was soon again on deck, displaying that greatness of mind and exertion, which, though it may be equalled, can never be excelled; the third lieutenant, John Bulford, was also wounded, but not obliged to quit his quarters: second lieutenant Samuel Mottley, and he, deserve my highest acknowledgments. The cool and steady conduct of Mr Walker, the master, was very great during the battle, as also that of Lieuts. Wilson and Magill, of the marines.

On being taken on board the enemy's ship, I ceased to wonder at the result of the battle. The United States is built with the scantling of a 74-gun ship, mounting 30 long 24-pounders (English ship guns) on her main-deck, and 22 42 pounders carronades, with two long 24-pounders on her quarter-deck and forecastle, howitzer guns on her tops, and a travelling carronade on her upper deck, with a complement of 478 picked men.

The enemy has suffered much in the masts, rigging, and hull above and below water: her loss in killed and wounded I am not aware of, but I know a lieutenant and 6 men have been thrown overboard.

Inclosed you will be pleased to receive the names of the killed and wounded on board the Macedonian; and I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN S. CARDEN.

To J. W. Croker, Esq.
Admiralty.

END OF VOLUME V. PART I.

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